

ISLAMIC HISTORY SERIES PART II
THE RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS 2

‘UMAR

IBN AL-KHATTÂB

HIS LIFE & TIMES

عمر بن الخطاب (رضي الله عنه) شخصيته وعصره

Vol. 1

Dr. ‘Ali Muhammad aş-Şallâbi



الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

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Islamic History —
The Rightly Guided Caliphs (2)

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb

His Life and Times

VOLUME ONE

عمر بن الخطاب رضى الله عنه

شخصيته و عصره

Dr. ‘Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi

Translated by

Nasiruddin al-Khattab

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

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Transliteration Chart

أ	a
آ. ي	â
ب	b
ت	t
ة	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ

ظ	<u>dh</u>
ع	‘
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ - و - هـ	h
و	w
و (as a long vowel)	oo
ي	y
ي (as a long vowel)	ee
ء	,
	(Omitted in initial position)

َ	Fathah	a
ِ	Kasrah	i
ُ	Ḍammah	u
ّ	Shaddah	Double letter
◌◌	Sukoon	Absence of vowel

Translator's Foreword

These are tumultuous times in which much is changing. The Muslim Ummah is faced with new challenges which it must meet and overcome, whilst also striving for its very survival in some parts of the world.

Those who study history know that there are patterns and scenarios that are repeated over and over again as nations and empires rise and fall. There is very little that has never happened before, in one way or another. The current emergence of the "new world order" is in many ways, nothing new. During the period covered in this book, the life of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the Muslims were also faced with a "new world order" as the old powers declined and the new and vibrant movement of Islam moved to centre stage.

The "new world order" of 'Umar's time was controlled by Shari'ah and motivated by the desire to spread true guidance, unlike its modern counterpart, which is controlled by corporate interests and motivated by greed. However, many of the challenges faced, then and now, were (and are) matters that are not addressed directly in the Qur'an and Sunnah. This is where the author of this book makes a valuable contribution, by showing in detail how the Muslim leadership during the golden age of Islam was able to rise to the challenges and deal successfully with them.

At a time of intense confusion within the Muslim ummah as to which approach is best, amid conflicting calls to follow the way of customs or traditions or to "modernize" and follow the west, this book provides a practical model, in the life of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb,

of how the Muslims can draw upon the lessons of the greatest era in Islamic history — that of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs — and apply it in practical terms to the issues that face us now.

‘Umar sought solutions from the Qur’an and Sunnah to the problems and challenges the ummah faced, but he was not rigid or literal in his approach. He realized that simply repeating what has worked in the past was not always the answer, and that it was essential to understand the spirit of Shari‘ah as well as the “letter of the law”. His approach was innovative (in the purely linguistic sense) yet still firmly within the boundaries of Islam.

Although he was a man of immense and profound knowledge, he consulted other scholars, knowledgeable people and experts at every step of the way. When an important decision was to be taken, he would summon the senior *Ṣaḥābah* and consult with them, and the decision would be taken by consensus only after thorough debate.

Far from being a distant ruler, ‘Umar was one whose approach was very much “hands on”. During his nightly patrols of Madeenah, for which he was famous, he was able to discover what the common people thought and was able to take action accordingly, such as when he changed the rules to allow a stipend to be paid to Muslim children from birth and not from the time they were weaned, because that ruling made mothers hasten to wean their children, which caused suffering to their infants.

When faced with the extensive famine of ar-Ramādah, ‘Umar was especially close to the people, ensuring that all were cared for, providing food for the refugees who flocked to Madeenah and leading by example, ensuring that he did not eat any better than his people. He also took the bold step of delaying zakah payments and suspending *ḥadd* punishments for the duration, until the rains finally

came and life returned to normal. During the plague of Amwās he also introduced what we would call emergency measures, such as placing restrictions on movement into and out of the affected areas.

In military matters, although he was based in Madeenah, 'Umar kept a close eye on the campaigns and directed the course of battle. Through an extensive communications network, 'Umar was kept informed of the troops' progress and received intelligence about the lay of the land and the enemy's strengths and weakness, and was thus able to issue detailed instructions. But his interest went further than that. 'Umar felt that he was personally responsible, before Allah, for everything that happened in the Islamic state, even the widows in Iraq and even the livestock.

Once lands had been conquered, that was not the end of the matter. Unlike the old Bedouin approach of attack and retreat, 'Umar's method was far more strategic. He took care to ensure that the new lands were incorporated fully into the Islamic state and that the message of Islam was spread to their people. Thus he established new cities, as military bases but also as centres of learning and *da'wah*. Their fair treatment of the non-Muslims who came under their rule also contributed to their success. The vassal peoples of the old Roman empire welcomed the newcomers who treated them with mercy and justice. When the Muslims found themselves unable to defend the people of Homs in accordance with the terms of their treaty, they returned their *Jizyah* to them, and the people of Homs looked forward to the day when the Muslims would return to rule their city again. This approach won the hearts of many who embraced Islam willingly.

It is worth noting that most, if not all, of the lands which 'Umar won for Islam with this approach are still Muslim today, and are mostly Arabic-speaking.

Along with the other *Ṣaḥābah*, 'Umar did not let victory make him become proud or arrogant. They believed that victory came only from Allah and that their duty was to put their trust in Him and give thanks to Him.

As well as the numerous practical examples of leadership that are given, this book presents us with an important lesson which all Muslims need to grasp, which is that the Ummah's strength does not lie in money, natural resources or numbers — we have all of these in abundance today, whereas the ummah at the time of 'Umar had very little of any of them. The source of the ummah's strength lies in Islam and in its adherence to the way of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Having tried all the "isms" and ideologies of the last century or two, which have all failed and have led only to an increase in the human misery of the Ummah, it is time to recognize that we have no choice but to return to Islam and take it seriously, as the *Ṣaḥābah* did.

May Allah reward the author for his extensive research and for presenting such important information to the Ummah, lessons which we have never needed to learn more than we do now.

Nasiruddin al-Khattâb

Introduction

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own selves and from our evil deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomsoever He sends astray none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, with no partner or associate, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

«O' you who believe! Fear Allah [by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden] as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always,] and die not except in a state of Islam [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allah)].»

(Qur'an 3: 102)

«O' mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person [Adam], and from him [Adam] He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand [your mutual rights], and [do not cut the relations of] the wombs [kinship]. Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.»

(Qur'an 4: 1)

«O' you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak [always] the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement [i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise].»

(Qur'an 33: 70-71)

Acknowledgements regarding the writing of this book go first of all to Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, then to a good group of scholars, shaykhs and *dâ'iyahs* who encouraged me to go ahead and study the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (*al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*). One of them said to me that there is a gap between the Muslims and that period, and there is confusion with regard to priorities. Many of the Muslims are better acquainted with the lives of the *dâ'iyahs*, scholars and reformers than with the lives of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, but that era is rich in lessons about the political, educational, media, moral, economic, intellectual, jihadi and fiqhi aspects of Islam, of which we are in the greatest need. We need to study the institutions of the Islamic state and how they developed as time went by, such as the judiciary and financial institutions, the caliphate system, the military institutions, the way in which governors were appointed and the process of *ijtihad* which took place at that time when the Muslim ummah came into contact with the Persian and Byzantine civilizations, and the progress of the Islamic conquests.

This book began as an idea which Allah willed should become reality. Allah took me by the hand and smoothed the way and made things easy for me. He helped me to find the references and sources, and praise is due to Allah for helping me to do that.

The history of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs is full of lessons which are scattered throughout the books and sources, whether they have to do with history, hadith, fiqh, literature, *tafseer*, or biographies and evaluations of narrators. I began to study them as I was able to, and I found therein abundant historical material which is difficult to find in the well known history books that are currently in circulation. I compiled this material, organized it, examined it and analyzed it. The first book, about Abu Bakr as-Şiddeeq (ؓ) had already been published under the title: *Abu Bakr as-Şiddeeq, Shakhsiyatuhu wa*

'Asruhu — Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, His Personality and Era.

By the grace of Allah, this book was widely distributed in the Arabic bookstores and international book fairs. It reached many readers, *dā'iyaḥs*, scholars and seekers of knowledge, as well as the general Muslim public. They encouraged me to continue studying the history of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and to try to simplify it and make it accessible to the ummah in a style that is more suited for modern times.

The history of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is filled with lessons. If we present them properly and avoid the weak and fabricated narrations, and the books of the Orientalists and their lackeys among the secularists and Rāfidis and their ilk, and follow the methodology of *Ahl as-Sunnah*, then we will have contributed to the presentation of history according to the view of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, as well as having come to know more about the life and times of those concerning whom Allah (ﷻ) said:

«And the foremost to embrace Islam of the *Muhājiroon* and the Anṣār and also those who followed them exactly [in Faith]. Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow [Paradise], to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.» (*Qur'an* 9: 100)

«Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate [in prayer]...»

(*Qur'an* 48: 29)

And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said concerning them: «The best of my ummah are the generation to whom I was sent...»¹

¹ Muslim, vol. 4, Pp. 1963-1964.

And ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه) said concerning them: “Whoever would like to follow the way of someone, let him follow the way of those who have died, for those who are still living are not safe from *fitnah*.”

Such were the Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ), who were, by Allah, the best of this ummah, the most sincere, the most knowledgeable and the least pretentious. They were the people whom Allah chose to accompany His Prophet and establish His religion, so we must acknowledge their virtue and follow in their footsteps, adhering as much as possible to their example of morality and religious commitment, for they followed true guidance.² The *Ṣaḥâbah* applied the rulings of Islam and spread Islam east and west. Their era was the best of eras, for they were the ones who taught the ummah the Qur’an and narrated the Sunnahs and reports from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Their history is a storehouse of the ummah’s treasures: thought, culture, knowledge, jihad, conquests and dealings with other peoples and nations. In this glorious history, subsequent generations find that which will help them to direct their affairs in life according to the right way and sound guidance, and to understand the true nature of their message and their role in this world. From that era they can derive that which will nourish their souls, discipline their hearts and enlighten their minds. It will motivate them, teach them lessons and help their ideas to mature. *Dâ‘iyahs*, scholars, shaykhs and all members of the ummah will find therein that which will help them to prepare the new generation of Muslims and raise them according to the Prophet’s way. They will become acquainted with the main features of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate and the attributes of its leaders and the people, and the reasons for its demise.

² *Sharḥ as-Sunnah*, by al-Baghawi, vol. 1, Pp. 214-215.

This second book about the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs speaks of al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, his personality and his era. He was the second caliph and the best of the noble *Ṣaḥābah* after Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (may Allah be pleased with them both). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) encouraged us and commanded us to follow their path and their guidance. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «I urge you to adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me.»³

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was the best of the righteous after the Prophets and Messengers and Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (رضي الله عنه). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said of them both: «Follow the example of the two who come after me, Abu Bakr and 'Umar.»⁴ There are many well-known *aḥādeeth* — hadiths — and reports which speak of the virtues of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Among the nations who came before you were some who were inspired. If anyone among my ummah were to be inspired it would be 'Umar.»⁵

And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Whilst I was sleeping, I saw myself drawing water from a well with a bucket. Abu Bakr came and drew a bucket or two weakly. May Allah forgive him.»⁶ Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came and the bucket turned into a very large one in his hands. I had never seen any one so strong doing this task, all the people drank their fill and watered their camels that knelt down there.»⁷

³ *Sunan Abi Dawood*, 4/201; Tirmidhi, 5/44, *ḥasan ṣaḥeeḥ*.

⁴ *Ṣaḥeeḥ Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, by Shaykh al-Albānī, 3/200.

⁵ Bukhari, hadith no. 3689; Muslim, hadith no. 2398.

⁶ "May Allah forgive him"; this is not intended to belittle Abu Bakr; rather it is a phrase which the Muslims used to use frequently in their speech.

⁷ Muslim hadith no. 2393.

‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ (ؓ) said: «I said: “O’ Messenger of Allah, which of the people is most beloved to you?” He said, “‘Â’ishah.” I said, “O’ Messenger of Allah, who among men? He said, “Her father.” I said, “Then who?” He said, “Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb,” then he named some other men.»⁸

The life of al-Fârooq ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) is a shining page of Islamic history, which outshines and supercedes all other histories. The history of all nations put together does not contain even a part of what his life contained of noble conduct, glory, sincerity, jihad and calling others for the sake of Allah. So I began to study his life and times in the reference books and sources, and I analyzed it, verified it and put it in order so that it would become accessible to the *dâ’iyahs*, *khaṭeebs*, scholars, politicians, thinkers, military commanders and rulers of the ummah, as well as the seekers of knowledge and the general public, so that they may benefit from it in their lives by following his example; and that Allah may bestow upon them success in this world and in the Hereafter.

I studied the life of ‘Umar from his birth until his martyrdom. In this book I discuss his lineage, his family and his life during the *Jâhiliyah*, as well as his becoming Muslim and his migration (*hijrah*), the effect that the Holy Qur’an and his keeping company with the Prophet (ﷺ) had on training him and forming his Islamic personality. I discuss the role he played in military campaigns and in the society of Madeenah during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ) and of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ؓ). I describe how he was appointed as caliph and explain the foundations of his way of ruling, such as *shoora* (consultation), establishing justice and equality among people, and his respect for personal freedom. I point out the most important characteristics of ‘Umar, his family life, his respect for *Ahl*

⁸ *Al-Iḥsân fee Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Hibbân*, 15/309.

al-Bayt, and his life in society after he became the caliph of the Muslims, how he took care of the women of that society, how he showed respect for people who were known for their virtue and good works, how he was keen to meet the needs of the people, how he trained some of the leaders of society, how he denounced some of those who were deviant in their behaviour, how he was concerned about the health of his people, how he set up a system to check on what was happening in the marketplace, how he was keen to attain the goals of shari'ah in society by defending the concept of *Tawḥeed* and fighting deviation and innovation (*bid'ah*), his concern regarding acts of worship and how he protected the honour of the *Mujāhideen*.

I also discuss 'Umar's deep concern for knowledge, how he kept an eye on the people by teaching them and guiding them in Madeenah, and how he made Madeenah a centre for *fatwas* and *fiqh*, how he made it into a school which produced scholars, *dā'iyahs*, governors and *qādis*. I describe 'Umar's influence on the schools of thought in other regions, such as the schools of Makkah, Madeenah, Baṣra, Koofah, Syria and Egypt. 'Umar took care to prepare specialized scholars whom he sent out to the regions. As the conquests spread, he taught commanders and governors to establish mosques in the conquered lands that would become centres of *da'wah* and teaching and spreading Islamic civilization. These mosques were the first educational institutions in Islam, through which the scholars among the *Ṣaḥābah* began to teach the people who had recently entered Islam voluntarily, with no force or pressure. The number of mosques in which *Jumu'ah* prayers were offered in 'Umar's state reached twelve thousand. The educational institutions which were established in the wake of the army that conquered Iraq, Iran, Syria, Egypt and North Africa were led by distinguished scholars, *faqeehs* and *dā'iyahs* who had learned at the hands of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Madeenah. 'Umar made use of these

resources and directed them properly, producing the scholars and *faqueehs* who kept pace with the conquering army.

I also discuss 'Umar's interest in poetry and poets. 'Umar was the most interested of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in poetry, which he would listen to and appreciate. He was also the most likely to quote suitable poetry on all occasions, so much so that it was said that there was no incident that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came across, but he would say a line of verse that was appropriate to the occasion. He was also a *brilliant literary critic*. He had standards to which he would refer when he decided which text was better than another, or which poet was better than another. These standards included correct usage of Arabic language, use of normal words and phrases, avoidance of complex and weird phrases, clarity and straightforwardness, use of words that fit the meaning, use of beautiful words in the proper context, and proper rhythm. He used to forbid poets to lampoon others or say anything that went against the aims of shari'ah. He would use different methods of disciplining them. For example, he bought the honour of the Muslims by paying al-Ḥuṭay'ah three thousand *dirhams* (to stop composing verse that offended the Muslims).

I also discuss the development of construction and crisis management during the time of 'Umar. He took an interest in roads and means of transportation on land and sea. He established border posts and cities as military bases and centres of civilization. I discuss the establishment of major cities, such as Baṣra, Koofah, al-Fuṣṭāṭ and Sirt, at the time of 'Umar, as well as the military and economic considerations which he took into account when establishing cities.

I also discuss the methods followed by 'Umar when he was faced with the Year of ar-Ramādah (a year of famine), and how he himself set an example for the people and sought the help of Allah. I describe the refugee camps that he set up during that year, and how he

asked the people of other regions for aid, how he prayed for rain, and some of the cases of *ijtihād* that came up during the year of ar-Ramādah, such as the suspension of the *ḥadd* punishment for stealing, and the postponement of paying *zakah* during that year.

I also describe the year of the plague, and how 'Umar dealt with this epidemic, which led to the death of the senior commanders of the Muslim army in Syria. More than twenty thousand Muslims died of the plague and things went out of control because their estates were not being distributed. 'Umar went to Syria and distributed provisions, and set up troops to patrol the border during the winter and the summer. He protected the borders of Syria, appointed governors and organized the affairs of the army, commanders and common folk, and distributed the estates of the dead among the living.

I explain the role that 'Umar played in the development of financial and judiciary institutions. I speak of the financial institutions and the sources of the state's income at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ), such as *zakah*, *jizyah*, *kharāj*, *'ushoor* and booty. I discuss the *bayt al-māl* (treasury) of the Muslims and the establishment of ministries, the expenditure of the state at the time of 'Umar, his *ijtihād* concerning *ard al-kharāj* (conquered land) and his issuing an Islamic currency. I describe the role that 'Umar played in the development of judiciary institutions, the most important letters that 'Umar sent to judges, how he appointed judges, their salaries, qualifications and duties, the sources of judiciary rulings, the evidence followed by judges, and the rulings passed by 'Umar on the basis of *ijtihād*, such as his ruling on forging the official seal of the state, on the man who stole from the *bayt al-māl* in Koofah, the man who was unaware that *zinā* is *ḥarām*, and other rulings. I also discuss 'Umar's *fiqh* in dealing with governors, and I mention the regions of the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar and the names of the governors

of those regions at his time. And I describe the most important guidelines followed by 'Umar in appointing governors, the conditions that he stipulated for them, the characteristics of 'Umar's governors, the rights and duties of the governors, how 'Umar checked on the governors and brought them to account, how he handled complaints from the people against governors, and the kinds of punishment that he carried out on governors. I also tell the story of how he dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (ؓ) on two occasions, the main reasons for dismissing him, the attitude of the Muslim society towards this dismissal, the reaction of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed to this decision, and what he said about 'Umar when he was on his deathbed.

I also describe the conquests of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Egypt and Libya during the time of 'Umar, and the lessons that we can learn from these conquests. I shed some light on the correspondence that took place between 'Umar and the leaders of his army, from which may be derived educational material which deals with directing people and establishing states, guiding societies and leaders, and the art of war. From the letters of 'Umar to the commanders I have also derived information on duties owed to Allah, such as being steadfast when facing the enemy, fighting them with the intention of supporting the religion of Allah and fulfilling the trust, and not being biased when supporting the religion of Allah. I also derived information on duties owed to commanders, such as always obeying them and following their commands; and the duties owed to soldiers, such as checking on them, being kind to them during campaigns, encouraging them to fight, etc.

I also discuss the relationship between 'Umar and kings of other lands, the results of 'Umar's conquests, and the final days of his life, and his concept of meeting Allah, which dominated his thoughts and became deeply rooted in his heart from the time he became

Muslim until he was martyred. In this book, I try to explain how 'Umar understood Islam and how he lived in this world, and how he influenced the course of events during his lifetime. I discuss the various aspects of his personality, political, military, administrative and judicial, and his life in society when he was one of the ordinary people and after he was appointed as caliph after the death of Abu Bakr. I also focus on his role in the development of financial, judicial, administrative and military institutions.

This book proves the greatness of 'Umar and confirms to the reader that his faith, knowledge, intellect, eloquence, attitude and influence were all great. 'Umar represented greatness in all its aspects, and his greatness was based on his understanding and application of Islam and his strong relationship with Allah and his following the guidance of the Messenger (ﷺ).

'Umar was a leader who guided people in the right direction and whose example was followed by others in word and deed. His life is one of the soundest sources of faith, motivation and correct understanding of Islam. How great is the Muslim ummah's need for men of sound caliber who follow the example of the noble *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions of the last Prophet) and embody the sublime teachings of Islam, bringing it to life by means of sacrifices that the people can see. The history of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the noble *Ṣaḥābah* is a constant reminder to the ummah through all generations, and the way to benefit from this reminder is for great people of the modern age to follow the example of these great leaders and put it into practice in modern circumstances so that no one will think that these lessons were only suited to a certain age and that to repeat this achievement requires an environment similar to theirs. The facts indicate that every time the motivation of faith and the concept of meeting Allah grows stronger, and the Muslims become keener to base their actions on these ideas, then Allah, the Exalted,

Almighty, grants victory to His close friends and directs circumstances to serve their interests.

I have striven to study the personality and era of ‘Umar to the best of my ability, without claiming to be infallible or free from error. I seek nothing but the pleasure and reward of Allah, and He is the One Whose help I seek to achieve that. I ask Him to make this book of benefit, for He is the One with the most sublime names and the One Who hears all prayers.

I completed this book on Wednesday 13 Ramaḍān 1422 A.H. / 28 November 2001, at 7.05 a.m. All praise be to Allah, first and last. I ask Him, may He be glorified and exalted, to accept this work, to open people’s hearts that they might benefit from it, and to bless it by His generosity and bounty. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Whatever of mercy [i.e. of good], Allah may grant to mankind, none can withhold it; and whatever He may withhold, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾ (Qur’an 35: 2)

In conclusion, I can only stand before Allah with a humble heart, acknowledging His bounty, kindness and grace, for He is the most Generous, the Helper, the Source of strength. To Him be praise for the blessings that He has bestowed upon me. I ask Him by His most beautiful names and His sublime attributes to make my effort solely for His sake and to make it of benefit to His slaves. May He grant me reward for every letter I have written and add them to the balance of my good deeds. May He reward my brothers who helped me as much as they could to complete this humble effort. I hope that every Muslim who reads this book will not forget to make *du‘ā* for the slave who is in need of his Lord’s forgiveness, mercy and pleasure. Allah says:

﴿... My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful

for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.﴾

(Qur'an 27: 19)

Glory and praise be to You, O' Allah. I bear witness that there is no god but You, I seek Your forgiveness and I repent to You. And the end of our supplication is: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."

‘Ali Muhammad as-Sallâbi

CHAPTER ONE

‘Umar (ﷺ) in Makkah

1. His name, Lineage, Nicknames, Physical Attributes, and Family, and his Life during the *Jâhiliyah*

1.1. His name, lineage and nicknames

His full name was ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb ibn Nufayl ibn ‘Abdul-‘Uzza ibn Riyâḥ ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn Quruṭ ibn Razâḥ ibn ‘Adiyy ibn Ka‘b ibn Lu‘ayy¹ ibn Ghâlib al-Qurashi al-‘Adawi.² His lineage converges with that of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Ka‘b ibn Lu‘ayy ibn Ghâlib.³ He was known as Abu Ḥafṣ⁴ and earned the nickname of al-Fârooq (the Criterion)⁵ because he showed his Islam openly in Makkah and through him Allah distinguished (*farraqa*) between disbelief and faith.⁶

¹ *At-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa‘d, 3/265; *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb* by Ibn ‘Abdul-Hâdi, 1/131.

² *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ’il Ameer al-Mu’mineen ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 1/131.

³ *Ibid.*, 1/131.

⁴ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Hayât al-Fârooq ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 15.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

1.2. His birth and physical characteristics

'Umar was born thirteen years after the Year of the Elephant.⁷ With regard to his physical characteristics, he was white with a reddish complexion, with handsome cheeks, nose and eyes, and large hands and feet. He was muscular, tall, solid and bald. He was taller than average, as if he was riding on a mount. He was very strong, not weak or puny.⁸ He used to dye his hair with henna and the ends of his moustache were long.⁹ When he walked, he walked quickly, when he spoke, he spoke clearly, and when he struck, he caused pain.¹⁰

1.3. His family

His father was al-Khaṭṭāb ibn Nufayl. 'Umar's grandfather Nufayl ibn 'Abdul-'Uzza was one of those to whom Quraysh used to refer for judgement.¹¹ His mother was Ḥantamah bint Hâshim ibn al-Mugheerah, and it was said that she was the daughter of Hâshim and the sister of Abu Jahl.¹² The view of most historians is that she was the daughter of Hâshim and the paternal cousin of Abu Jahl ibn Hishâm.¹³

With regard to his wives, sons and daughters: During the *Jâhiliyah*, he married Zaynab bint Madh'oon, the sister of 'Uthmân ibn Madh'oon, and she bore him 'Abdullâh, 'Abdur-Rahmân the

⁷ *Târeekh al-Khulafa'* by as-Suyootî, p. 133.

⁸ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by al-'Âni, p. 15.

⁹ If he was angry or upset he would take hold of them and twist them.

¹⁰ *Tahdheeb al-Asmâ'* by an-Nawawi, 2/14; *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq* by al-Qurashi, p. 24.

¹¹ *Nasab Quraysh* by az-Zubayri, p. 347.

¹² *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq* by al-Qurashi, p. 22.

¹³ *Ibid.*

elder and Ḥafṣah. And he married Maleekah bint Jarwāl, who bore him 'Ubaydullāh. He divorced her at al-Ḥudaybiyah, and after that she married Abu al-Jahm ibn Hudhayfah. And he married Quraybah bint Abi Umayyah al-Makhzoomi, and divorced her at al-Ḥudaybiyah; after that she married 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Abi Bakr. And he married Umm Ḥakeem bint al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, after her husband 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl was killed in Syria.¹⁴ She bore him Fāṭimah, then he divorced her; and it was said that he did not divorce her.¹⁵ And he married Jameelah¹⁶ bint 'Āṣim ibn Thābit ibn Abi al-Aqlaḥ of al-Aws. And he married 'Ātikah bint Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl, who had previously been married to 'Abdullāh ibn Abi Bakr.¹⁷ When 'Umar was killed, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām (رضي الله عنه) married her and it was said that she was the mother of his son 'Iyād. And Allah knows best.

He proposed marriage to Umm Kulthoom, the daughter of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, when she was still young. He spoke to 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) concerning her, but Umm Kulthoom said: "I have no need of him." 'Ā'ishah asked, "Are you rejecting the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" She said, "Yes, for he lives a rough life." 'Ā'ishah sent word to 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, who told 'Umar not to marry her and suggested instead that he marry Umm Kulthoom bint 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, whose mother was Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), so she was descended from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). So he asked 'Ali for her hand in marriage, and he married her to him. 'Umar gave her a dowry of forty thousand. She bore him Zayd and Ruqayyah.¹⁸ And he

¹⁴ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/144.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah Khilāfat 'Umar* by as-Sulami, p. 7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/212.

married Luhyah — a woman from Yemen — who bore him ‘Abdur-Rahmân the younger, and it was said, the middle one. Al-Wâqidi said: “She was an *umm walad* (a concubine who bore her master a child) and not a wife.”¹⁹ They said: “He also had a concubine call Fakeehah, who bore him Zaynab.” Al-Wâqidi said: “She was the youngest of his children.”²⁰

The total number of his children was thirteen. Their names were: Zayd the elder, Zayd the younger, ‘Âsim, ‘Abdullâh, ‘Abdur-Rahmân the elder, ‘Abdur-Rahmân the middle one, ‘Abdur-Rahmân the younger, ‘Ubaydullâh, ‘Iyâd, Ḥaḥṣah, Ruqayyah, Zaynab and Fâtimah (may Allah be pleased with them all). The total number of his wives whom he married during the *Jâhiliyah* and in Islam, whom he divorced or died and left behind, was seven.²¹ ‘Umar married in order to produce offspring and have many children. He said: “I do not come to women because of desire. Were it not for children, I would not care if I never saw a woman with my own eyes.”²² And he said: “I force myself to have intercourse, hoping that Allah will bring forth from me a soul who will glorify and remember Him.”²³

1.4. His life during the *Jâhiliyah*

‘Umar spent half of his life in the *Jâhiliyah*, and grew up like his peers of Quraysh, except that he had an advantage over them in that he was one of those who had learned to read, of whom there were very few.²⁴ He bore responsibility at an early age, and had a very

¹⁹ *Târeekh al-Umam wa al-Mulook* by al-Ṭabari, 5/191.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 5/192.

²¹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/144.

²² *Ash-Shaykhân Abu Bakr wa ‘Umar*, ed. Dr. Iḥsân Ṣadaqi, p. 227.

²³ *Fawâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa' al-Karâm* by Qâsim ‘Ashoor, p. 112

²⁴ *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee ‘Ahd ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Fârooq al=

harsh upbringing in which he knew no type of luxury or manifestation of wealth. His father al-Khaṭṭāb forced him to tend his camels. His father's harsh treatment had a negative effect on 'Umar which he remembered all his life. 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Ḥaṭīb spoke of that and said: "I was with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in Ḍajnān²⁵ and he said, 'I used to tend (livestock) for al-Khaṭṭāb in this place, and he was very harsh. Sometimes I would tend (the livestock) and sometimes I would gather firewood.'"²⁶

This was a period of hardship during 'Umar's life, and he would often remember it. Sa'd ibn al-Musayyab tells us: "'Umar (ﷺ) went for Ḥajj, and when he was in Ḍajnān he said, 'There is no god but Allah, the Most High, the Most Great, the One Who gives whatever He wills to whomever He wills. I used to tend the camels of al-Khaṭṭāb in this valley, wearing a woollen garment. He was harsh; he would exhaust me when I worked and beat me if I fell short. And now here I am, with no one between me and Allah.'"

The son of al-Khaṭṭāb did not tend livestock for his father only; rather he used to tend the livestock of his maternal aunts of Banu Makhzoom. This was narrated to us from 'Umar himself, when he was pondering one day the fact that he had become the caliph, so who could be better than him? In order to remind himself of what he was — as he thought — he stood before the Muslims and announced that he was no more than a shepherd, who used to tend the flocks of his maternal aunts of Banu Makhzoom. Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Makhzoomi narrated that his father said: "'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) called out that prayer was about to begin, and when the people had

=Majdalāwi, p. 90.

²⁵ Ḍajnān is a mountain some distance from Makkah. It was said that it is 25 km away.

²⁶ Narrated by Ibn 'Asākir in his *Tāreekh*, 52/268; *Ḥalaqāt ibn Sa'd*, 3/266. Dr. 'Āṭif Lamāḍah said: its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

gathered and said *takbeer*, he ascended the *minbar* and praised and glorified Allah as He deserves, and sent blessings and peace upon His Prophet, then he said: "O' people, I remember when I used to tend the flocks of my maternal aunts of Banu Makhzoom, and they would give me a handful of dates or raisins, which would be sufficient for the day, and what a day that was!"

Then he came down, and 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, all you did was to denigrate yourself." He said, "Woe to you, O' son of 'Awf! I was alone and I started to think. I said to myself, 'You are the caliph, who is better than you?' So I wanted to remind myself of what I am." According to another report: "I noticed something in myself, and I wanted to bring myself down a rung or two."²⁷

Undoubtedly this job — tending livestock — which was the constant work of 'Umar in Makkah, before he entered Islam, caused him to acquire good characteristics, such as forbearance, patience and toughness. But tending sheep was not the only work that the son of al-Khattâb did during the *Jâhiliyah*.²⁸ From his early youth he also excelled in all kinds of sports, such as wrestling, riding and horsemanship. He enjoyed and narrated poetry²⁹, and he was interested in the history and affairs of his people. He was keen to attend the great fairs of the Arabs, such as 'Ukâz, Mijannah and Dhu al-Majâz, where he would make the most of the opportunity to engage in trade and learn the history of the Arabs, and the battles and contests that had taken place among the tribes. These events were discussed in a literary fashion by the masters of eloquence before the

²⁷ *At-Tabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/293; there are corroborating reports which strengthen it.

²⁸ *Al-Fârooq ma'a an-Nabi*, p. 6.

²⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi al-'Âm*, by 'Ali Hasan Ibrâheem, p. 226; *al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 90.

prominent figures of the tribes, which meant that Arab history was constantly being discussed and was unlikely to be forgotten. Sometimes these literary contests would spark wars, and 'Ukâz itself was a direct cause of four wars which were known as the wars of al-Fijâr.³⁰

'Umar engaged in trade and profited, which made him one of the rich men of Makkah. He became acquainted with many people in the lands that he visited for the purpose of trade. He travelled to Syria in the summer and Yemen in the winter.³¹ He occupied a prominent position in Makkan society during the *Jâhiliyah*, and played an effective role in shaping events. He was helped by the outstanding history of his forefathers. His grandfather Nufayl ibn 'Abdul-'Uzza was one to whom Quraysh referred their disputes for judgement³² and his ancestor Ka'b ibn Lu'ayy was held in high esteem by the Arabs. They had recorded their history from the year of his death until the Year of the Elephant.³³ 'Umar inherited this status from his forefathers which brought him a great deal of knowledge about the life and circumstances of the Arabs, in addition to his own smartness and intelligence. So they would come to him to resolve their disputes. Ibn Sa'd said: "'Umar used to judge between the Arabs regarding their disputes before Islam."³⁴

'Umar (ﷺ) was wise, eloquent, well spoken, strong, forbearing, noble, persuasive and clear of speech, which made him qualified to be an ambassador for Quraysh, to speak up for them

³⁰ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: Hayâtuhu, 'Ilmuhu, Adabuhu*, by Dr. 'Ali Aḥmad al-Khaṭṭāb, p. 153.

³¹ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Dr. Muḥammad Aḥmad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 17.

³² *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Dr. al-'Āni, p. 16

³³ *Târeekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, Pp. 1/7, quoting from Dr. al-'Āni, p. 16.

³⁴ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq* by Dr. al-'Āni, p. 16.

before the other tribes.³⁵ Ibn al-Jawzi said: “The role of ambassador fell to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. If there was a war between Quraysh and another tribe, they would send him as an ambassador, and if another tribe was boasting against them, they would send him to respond in kind, and they were pleased with him.”³⁶

He used to defend all the traditions, acts of worship and systems to which Quraysh were accustomed. His nature was one of sincerity which led him to defend all that he believed in to the bitter end. So ‘Umar resisted Islam in the beginning, because he feared that this new religion would shake the system that was well established in Makkah and which gave Makkah a special status among the Arabs. For it was the location of the House to which people came on pilgrimage, which gave Quraysh a unique status among the Arabs, and brought spiritual and material wealth to Makkah. This was the reason for the city’s prosperity and its people’s wealth. So the rich men of Makkah resisted this religion and persecuted the weak among its converts, and ‘Umar was at the forefront of those who persecuted these weak ones.³⁷

He kept on beating a slave woman who had become Muslim, until his arms grew tired and the whip fell from his hand, then he stopped to rest. Abu Bakr passed by and saw how the slave woman was being tortured, so he bought her from him and set her free.³⁸

‘Umar lived during the *Jāhiliyah* and knew it inside out. He knew its true nature, its customs and traditions, and he defended it with all the strength he possessed. Hence when he entered Islam, he understood its beauty and true nature, and he understood the great

³⁵ Op.cit.

³⁶ *Manâqib ‘Umar*, p. 11.

³⁷ *Al-Fârooq ‘Umar*, by ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ash-Sharqâwi, p. 8.

³⁸ Ibid.

difference between guidance and misguidance, disbelief (*kufr*) and faith, truth and falsehood, and he spoke the famous words: "The bonds of Islam will be undone one by one when there will be a generation brought up in Islam who do not know what *Jāhiliyah* is."³⁹

2. His Becoming Muslim and Migrating

2.1. His becoming Muslim

The first ray of the light of faith that touched his heart came on the day when he saw the women of Quraysh leaving their homeland and travelling to a distant land because of the persecution that they were facing from him and others like him. His conscience was stirred; he felt remorse and pity for them, and he spoke kind words to them which they had never expected to hear from someone like him.⁴⁰

Umm 'Abdullāh bint Ḥantamah said: "When we were travelling, migrating to Abyssinia, 'Umar, who used to persecute us mercilessly, came and stood over me and said to me, 'Are you leaving, O' Umm 'Abdullāh?' I said, 'Yes, you have persecuted us and oppressed us, and by Allah we are going out in the land of Allah until Allah grants us a way out.' 'Umar said, 'May Allah be with you.' And I saw kindness in him that I had never seen before. When 'Āmir ibn Rabee'ah, who had gone out on some errand, came, I told him about that and he asked, 'It seems that you hope 'Umar will become Muslim?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'He will not become Muslim

³⁹ *Al-Fatāwa*, 15/36; *Farā'id al-Kalām li'l-Khulafa' al-Karām*, p. 144.

⁴⁰ *Aṭ-Ṭanẓāwiyāt*, p. 12.

until al-Khaṭṭāb's donkey becomes Muslim!'"⁴¹

'Umar was moved by this woman's attitude and he felt distressed. How much suffering the followers of this new religion were putting up with, but despite that they were standing firm. What was the secret behind this extraordinary strength? He felt sad and his heart was filled with pain.⁴²

Shortly after this incident, 'Umar became Muslim because of the *du'ā* of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which was the main reason for his becoming Muslim. He had prayed for him, saying: «O' Allah, support Islam with the more beloved of these two men to You: Abu Jahl ibn Hishām or 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.» And the more beloved of them to Him was 'Umar.⁴³ Allah created the circumstances that led 'Umar to Islam. It was narrated that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said:

"I never heard 'Umar saying about something that he thought it would be so-and-so, but it turned out as he said. Once, while 'Umar was sitting, a handsome man passed by him, 'Umar said, 'If I am not mistaken, this man is still following the religion of *Jāhiliyah*, or he was their soothsayer. Call the man to me.' When the man was called to him, he told him what he was thinking. The man said, 'I have never seen a day such as this, on which a Muslim is faced with such an accusation.' 'Umar said, 'I am determined that you should tell me the truth.' He said, 'I was a soothsayer during the *Jāhiliyah*.' 'Umar said, 'What was the most astonishing thing that your female Jinn told you of?' He said, 'One day while I was in the market, she came to me scared and said, 'Haven't you seen the Jinns and their despair, and

⁴¹ *Seerat Ibn Hishām*, 1/216; *Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* by Imam Aḥmad, 1/341, with a ḥasan isnad.

⁴² *Al-Fārooq 'Umar*, p. 9.

⁴³ Tirmidhi, 3682, *al-Manāqib*, classed as ḥasan by Shaykh al-Albāni in *Ṣaḥeḥ at-Tirmidhi*, hadith no. 2907.

they were overthrown after their defeat (and prevented from listening to the news from heaven) so that they (stopped going to heaven and) kept following the camel-riders (i.e. the Arabs)?" 'Umar said, 'He is speaking the truth. One day while I was sleeping near their idols, a man brought a calf and sacrificed it (to the idols). An (unseen) creature shouted at him, and I have never heard anything harsher than his voice. He was crying, 'O' you bold evil-doer! A matter of success!' An eloquent man is saying, 'There is no god but Allah.' Shortly thereafter it was said that a Prophet had appeared.'"⁴⁴

Many reports have been narrated concerning the reason why 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) became Muslim, but when we examine their isnads according to the standards of the science of hadith, we see that most of them are not sound.⁴⁵ From the reports which are narrated in the books of *Seerah* and history we may divide the story of his becoming Muslim and his public announcement of his conversion into two topics, as follows:

2.1.1. His determination to kill the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

Quraysh met to discuss the matter of the Prophet (ﷺ). They said: "Who will kill Muhammad?" 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: "I will do it." They said: "You can do it, O' 'Umar!" So he went out at midday on a very hot day, with his sword by his side, looking for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and a group of his Companions, namely Abu Bakr, 'Ali and Ḥamzah, among the Muslim men who had stayed with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and had not migrated with those who migrated to Abyssinia. He was told that they had gathered in Dār al-Arqam at the foot of aṣ-Ṣafa. He was met by Nu'aym ibn

⁴⁴ Narrated by Bukhari, 3866.

⁴⁵ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 23.

‘Abdullâh an-Naḥḥâm who said: “Where are you headed, O’ ‘Umar?” He said: “I am looking for this *ṣâbi*’ (this one who has changed his religion), who has divided Quraysh, insulted their intelligence, criticized their religion and slandered their gods. I am going to kill him.” Nu‘aym said to him: “What a bad course you have taken, O’ ‘Umar. By Allah, you are fooling yourself, and have become careless, and you are going to be the cause of Banu ‘Adiyy’s doom. Do you think that Banu ‘Abd Manâf will leave you walking on the face of the earth after you kill Muhammad?” They argued until their voices became loud, then ‘Umar said: “I think that you have changed your religion (i.e., become Muslim). If I find that to be true, I will start with you.” When an-Naḥḥâm realized that he could not stop him, he said: “I tell you that your family and the family of your brother-in-law have become Muslim and have forsaken you and the misguidance that you follow.” When he heard what he said, he asked, “Which of them?” He said, “Your brother-in-law, your paternal cousin and your sister.”⁴⁶

2.1.2. Umar’s raid on his sister’s house and the steadfastness of Fâtimah bint al-Khaṭṭâb before her brother

When ‘Umar heard that his sister and her husband had become Muslim, anger overtook him and he went to them. When he knocked at the door they said, “Who is it?” He said, “The son of al-Khaṭṭâb.” They were reading a paper that was in their hands, but when they realized that ‘Umar was there, they rushed to hide and they left the paper where it was. When he came in and his sister saw him, she recognized the evil intent that was on his face, so she hid the paper

⁴⁶ *Seerat Ibn Hishâm*, 1/343, from al-Qâsim ibn ‘Uthmân al-Baṣri from Anas, but al-Qâsim is *ḍa’eef* (weak).

beneath her leg. He said: "What is this muttering and whispering that I heard in your house?" For they had been reading Soorah Ṭa-Hâ. They said: "We were just talking amongst ourselves." He said: "Perhaps you have changed your religion?" His brother-in-law said: "O' 'Umar, what if the truth were in something other than your religion?" 'Umar attacked his brother-in-law Sa'eed, pulling his beard, and they wrestled. 'Umar was very strong, and he threw Sa'eed to the ground and jumped on him, then sat on his chest. His sister came to her husband's defence, but he pushed her away with his hand, and her face started to bleed. She said angrily: "O' enemy of Allah, are you hitting me because I believe in Allah alone?" He said, "Yes." She said: "Do what you like. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. We have become Muslim whether you like it or not." When 'Umar heard that, he regretted what he had done. He got up off his brother-in-law and sat down, then he said, "Give me this paper that you have." She said: "I will not do that." He said, "Woe to you! What you said moved me. Give it to me so that I may look at it. I give you my solemn word that I will not betray you; you can take it back and put it wherever you want." She said: "You are unclean, and ﴿... none can touch [it] but the purified﴾ (Qur'an 56: 79). Get up and wash yourself." So 'Umar went out and washed himself, then he came back to his sister and she gave the paper to him, on which was written *Soorah Ṭa-Hâ* and some other *soorahs*. He saw on it the words, *Bismillâh ir-Rahmân ir-Raḥeem* (in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful). When he read the words *ar-Rahmân ar-Raḥeem*, he was alarmed and threw the page down, then he regained control of himself, picked it up again, and saw the words:

﴿*Ṭa-Hâ* [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.]. We have not sent down the Qur'an unto you [O' Muhammad] to cause you distress, but only

as a Reminder to those who fear [Allah]. A Revelation from Him [Allah] Who has created the earth and high heavens. The Most Gracious [Allah] rose over [*Istawâ*] the [Mighty] Throne [in a manner that suits His Majesty]. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and all that is between them, and all that is under the soil. And if you [O' Muhammad] speak [the invocation] aloud, then verily, He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden. Allah! *Lâ ilâha illa Huwa* [none has the right to be worshipped but He]! To Him belong the Best Names.﴾

(*Qur'an* 20: 1-8)

He felt great respect for it and said: "Is this what Quraysh is running from?" Then he read some more, and when he reached the words,

﴿Verily, I am Allah! *Lâ ilâha illa Ana* [none has the right to be worshipped but I], so worship Me, and perform *aş-Şalâh* [*Iqâmat aş-Şalâh*] for My remembrance. Verily, the Hour is coming — and I am almost hiding it — that every person may be rewarded for that which he strives. Therefore, let not the one who believes not therein [i.e. in the Day of Resurrection, Reckoning, Paradise and Hell], but follows his own lusts, divert you therefrom, lest you perish.﴾

(*Qur'an* 20: 14-16)

— he said, "The One Who says this, no one should be worshipped other than Him. Tell me where Muhammad is."⁴⁷

2.1.3. 'Umar goes to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and declares his Islam

When Khabbâb (رضي الله عنه) heard that, he came out of the house — where he had been hiding — and said: "Be of good cheer, O' 'Umar,

⁴⁷ *Faḍâ'il aş-Şahâbah* by Imam Aḥmad, 1/344.

for I hope that this is the answer to the *du'ā'* of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) which he spoke on Monday: «O' Allah, support Islam with the one of these two men who is more beloved to You: Abu Jahl ibn Hishām or 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.»⁴⁸

He said: "Tell me where the Messenger of Allah is." When they realized that he was sincere, they said: "He is at the foot of aṣ-Ṣafa." 'Umar took his sword and carried it by his side, then he went to where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions were and knocked at the door. When they heard his voice they got scared, and no one dared to open the door to him, because they knew of his harsh views concerning the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). When Ḥamzah saw that the people were scared, he said, "What is the matter with you?" They said: "It is 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb." He said: "Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb? Open the door for him! If Allah wants good for him, he will become Muslim, and if He wants something other than that, then it will be easy for us to kill him." So they opened the door, and Ḥamzah and another man took hold of 'Umar's arms and brought him in to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who said: «Let him go.»⁴⁹ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up, took hold of the knots of his lower and upper garments, pulled him harshly and said, "What brings you here, O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb? By Allah, I don't think you are going to stop until Allah sends down calamity upon you." 'Umar said to him, "O' Messenger of Allah, I have come believing in Allah and His Messenger, and in that which you have brought from Allah." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "*Allāhu Akbar*," and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah in the house realized that 'Umar had become a Muslim. So the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) dispersed, feeling encouraged because 'Umar had become Muslim, as had Ḥamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib. They realized that

⁴⁸ Quoted previously; *aṭ-Ṭanẓāwiyāt*, p. 117.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 18.

these two would be able to protect the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and settle the scores with their enemies.»⁵⁰

2.1.4. 'Umar's keenness to call people to Islam publicly and to put up with hardship for that purpose

'Umar entered Islam with deep sincerity, and he strove to support Islam with all the strength he had been given. He said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): «“O' Messenger of Allah, are we not following the truth whether we live or die?” The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “Yes, indeed. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, you are following the truth, whether you live or die.” He said: “So why should we hide? By the One Who sent you with the truth, you should go out (and preach openly).”» It seems that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was also of the view that the time had come to preach his message openly, and that the *da'wah* had become strong enough to defend itself. So he gave permission to proclaim Islam openly. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out leading two columns, with 'Umar at the head of one and Ḥamzah at the head of the other, stirring up dust, until they entered the mosque. Quraysh looked at 'Umar and Ḥamzah, and felt distressed as never before. On that day the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) named him al-Fârooq.⁵¹

Allah strengthened Islam and the Muslims by means of 'Umar's conversion. He was a man of power who did not worry about whatever was behind him. The companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) were protected by him and Ḥamzah.⁵²

⁵⁰ *Faḍā'il as-Ṣaḥābah* by Imam Aḥmad, 1/344.

⁵¹ *Ḥilyah al-Awliya'*, 1/40; *Sifat as-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/103-104.

⁵² *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, Pp. 26, 27.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb challenged the *mushrikeen* of Quraysh, and fought them until he was able to pray at the Ka'bah⁵³, and the Muslims prayed with him. 'Umar was keen to annoy the enemies of Islam as much as he could. He himself told the story of that, as he said:

"I used not to be able to bear to see a Muslim man. I went to my maternal uncle Abu Jahl — who was of noble status among them — and knocked at his door. He said, 'Who is it?' I said, 'The son of al-Khaṭṭâb.' He came out to me, and I said, 'Have you heard that I have changed my religion?' He said, 'Have you?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Don't do that.' I said, 'Yes, (I have done it).' He said, 'Don't do that,' then he went inside and slammed the door in my face and left me there. I said, 'It doesn't matter.' Then I went to one of the noblemen of Quraysh and knocked at his door. He said, 'Who is it?' I said, 'The son of al-Khaṭṭâb.' He came out to me, and I said, 'Do you realize that I have changed my religion?' He said, 'Have you?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Don't do that.' Then he went inside and slammed the door in my face. I said, 'It doesn't matter.' A man said to me, 'Do you want people to know about your becoming Muslim?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'When the people gather in al-Hijr, you should go to this man — Jameel ibn Mu'ammâr al-Jumâhî — sit beside him, and say, 'Do you know that I have changed my religion?' So I did that, and he stood up and shouted at the top of his voice, 'The son of al-Khaṭṭâb has changed his religion!' The people jumped on me and started hitting me, and I was hitting them back.'"⁵⁴

According to a report narrated by 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه): When 'Umar became Muslim, Quraysh did not know of that. He said: "Who among the people of Makkah is most likely to tell others

⁵³ *Ar-Riyâd an-Nadrah* by Muḥibb aṭ-Ṭabari, 1/257.

⁵⁴ *Sharḥ al-Mawâhib*, 1/320; *aṭ-Ṭanṭâwiyât*, p. 19.

of what he hears?" It was said to him: "Jameel ibn Mu'ammār al-Jumāhī." So he went out to him, and I followed him to see what he was doing. I was a young boy but I understood everything I saw and heard. He went to him and said, "O' Jameel, I have become Muslim." By Allah, he did not answer him, but he got up, dragging his garment, and 'Umar followed him and I followed my father. He went and stood at the door of the mosque and yelled at the top of his voice: "O' Quraysh!" — for they were gathered around the Ka'bah — " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has apostatized!" 'Umar said from behind him, "He is lying. Rather I have become Muslim and I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." They attacked him, but 'Umar leapt on 'Utbah ibn Rabe'e'ah and sat on him; he started to beat him and poke his fingers in his eyes, and 'Utbah started screaming. Then the people kept away from him. 'Umar stood up and went around to all the places where he used to sit with people when he had been a disbeliever, and openly declared his Islam.⁵⁵ He kept fighting them until the sun reached its zenith, and 'Umar got tired and sat down. They gathered around him and he said: "What do you want?" Whilst they were like that, there came a man who was wearing a silken *hullah* (suit) and an embroidered shirt. He said: "What is the matter with you?" They said: "The son of al-Khaṭṭāb has changed his religion." He said: "So what? A man can chose a religion for himself. Do you think that Banu 'Adiyy will let you get away with it if you kill their companion?" So they dispersed. I [Ibn 'Umar] said to him in Madeenah: "O' my father, who was the man who turned the people back from you that day?" He said: "O' my son, that was al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il as-Sahmī."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Ar-Riyāḍ an-Naḍrah*, p. 319.

⁵⁶ *Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* by Imam Aḥmad, 1/346. Its isnaḍ is ḥasan.

2.1.5. The effect of his becoming Muslim on the *da'wah*

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood said: "We felt a sense of pride when 'Umar became Muslim, for we could not circumambulate the House and pray, until 'Umar became Muslim. When he became Muslim, he fought them until they left us alone. Then we prayed and circumambulated the Ka'bah."⁵⁷ He also said, "'Umar's becoming Muslim was a victory, his migration was help, and his caliphate was a mercy. We could not pray or circumambulate the House until 'Umar became Muslim. When he became Muslim, he fought them until they left us alone and let us pray."⁵⁸

Ṣuhayb ibn Sinān said: "When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb became Muslim, Islam came out into the open and the call to Islam was made in public. We sat around the Ka'bah in circles, and we circumambulated the House and settled our scores with those who had persecuted us. We started to hit back."⁵⁹

2.1.6. The date when 'Umar became Muslim, and the number of Muslims at the time of his conversion

'Umar became Muslim in *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the sixth year of the Prophethood, when he was twenty-seven years old.⁶⁰ He became Muslim three days after *Hamzah*.⁶¹ At that time the Muslims numbered thirty-nine. 'Umar said: "I remember that when I became Muslim, there were just thirty-nine men with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and I brought the number to forty." Thus Allah caused His religion to prevail and granted glory to Islam.

⁵⁷ *Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/344. Its isnad is ḥasan.

⁵⁸ *Ash-Shaykhān Abu Bakr wa 'Umar*, p. 141.

⁵⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/269; *Ṣifāt aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/274.

⁶⁰ *Tāreekh al-Khulafā'*, p. 137.

⁶¹ *Aṭ-Ṭantāwiyāt*, p. 22.

It was narrated that they numbered forty or forty-odd men and eleven women, but 'Umar did not know them all, because most of those who became Muslim concealed their Islam out of fear of the *mushrikeen*, especially 'Umar, for he was very harsh towards them. So he said that he brought the number to forty. He did not mention the women because they had no power and were weak.⁶²

2.2. His migration (Hijrah)

When 'Umar decided to migrate to Madeenah, he insisted on doing so openly. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said: " 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib said to me, 'I do not know of any of the *Muhâjireen* who did not migrate in secret, except 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. When he decided to migrate, he put on his sword, put his bow over his shoulder, picked up his arrows and carried his stick by his side. He went out to the Ka'bah, where a number of Quraysh were gathered in its courtyard, and circumambulated the House seven times, at a leisurely pace. Then he went to the *Maqâm* and prayed at a leisurely pace. Then he went to the circles of people, one by one, and said to them, 'May your faces become ugly! Allah will only rub these noses in the dust. Whoever wants his mother to be bereft of him and his children to become orphans or his wife to become a widow, let him meet me behind this valley.' 'Ali said, 'No one followed him except a few of those who were weak and oppressed. He taught them and told them about Islam, then he went on his way.'"⁶³

'Umar went to Madeenah before the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did. He was accompanied by some of his family members and his people: his brother Zayd ibn al-Khaṭṭâb; 'Amr and 'Abdullâh the

⁶² Op. cit., p. 22.

⁶³ See *Ṣaḥeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat al-Fârooq*, p. 30.

sons of Surâqah ibn al-Mu'tamir; Khunays ibn Ḥudhâfah as-Sahmi, the husband of his daughter Ḥafṣah; his paternal cousin Sa'eed ibn Zayd — who was one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise; Wâqid ibn 'Abdullâh at-Tameemi, one of their allies; Khawla ibn Abi Khawla and Mâlik ibn Abi Khawla — who were also allies of theirs from Banu 'Ajil and Banu al-Bukayr; and Iyâs, Khâlid, 'Âqil and 'Âmir, who were allies from Banu Sa'd ibn Layth. They stayed with Rifâ'ah ibn 'Abdul-Mundhir, among Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf, in Quba'.⁶⁴

Al-Bara' ibn 'Âzib (رضي الله عنه) said: "The first ones who came to us were Muṣ'ab ibn 'Umayr and Ibn Abi Maktoom. They used to teach the people Qur'an. Then Bilâl, Sa'd and 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir came, then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb came with twenty of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). Then the Prophet (ﷺ) came, and I never saw the people of Madeenah rejoice over anything as much as they rejoiced over the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)."⁶⁵

Thus 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb continued to serve his faith in word and deed, never fearing the blame of the blamers for the sake of Allah (cf. Qur'an 5: 54). He offered support and help to those Muslims in Makkah who wanted to migrate, until he himself left, accompanied by this large number of his relatives and allies. 'Umar helped others among his companions who wanted to migrate, if he feared that they would be persecuted and would succumb.⁶⁶ 'Umar himself told the story:

"When we decided to migrate we — 'Ayyâsh ibn Abi Rabee'ah, Hishâm ibn al-'Âṣ ibn Wâ'il as-Sahmi, and I — agreed to meet at a

⁶⁴ *Fath al-Bâri*, 7/261, quoting from *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq*, p. 31.

⁶⁵ Bukhari, hadith no. 3925.

⁶⁶ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Hayât al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 31.

stand of trees in an area called Adâ'at Bani Ghifâr⁶⁷, above (the valley of) Sarif⁶⁸. We said, 'If one of us does not make it there, it means that something has prevented him, and his two companions should carry on.' Ayyâsh ibn Abi Rabee'ah and I met at the stand of trees, but Hishâm was not able to join us. He was put to trial and succumbed.⁶⁹ When we reached Madeenah, we stayed among Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf in Quba'. Abu Jahl ibn Hishâm and al-Ḥârith ibn Hishâm came to see 'Ayyâsh ibn Abi Rabee'ah, who was their paternal cousin and their half-brother through their mother. They came to us in Madeenah when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was still in Makkah. They spoke to us and said, 'Your mother has vowed that no comb will touch her head until she sees you, and she will not seek shade from the sun until she sees you.' He felt sorry for her, but I said to him, 'O' 'Ayyâsh, by Allah, all the people want to do is to lead you astray from your religion, so beware of them. By Allah, if lice bother your mother she will comb her hair, and if the heat of Makkah becomes unbearable for her she will seek shade.' He said, 'I would rather respect the oath of my mother, and I have some wealth there which I am going to take.' I said, 'By Allah, you know that I am one of the wealthiest men of Quraysh. I will give you half of my wealth, just do not go with them.' But he insisted on going with them, and when he insisted I said, 'If you insist on doing that, then take this she-camel of mine, for she is well-trained and easy to ride. Stay on her back, and if you suspect that they are up to something, you can flee on her.' So he went out with them, riding that camel. Then when they had travelled partway, Abu Jahl said to him, 'O' my brother, by Allah, I feel uncomfortable on this camel of mine; may I ride behind

⁶⁷ This was ten miles away from Makkah.

⁶⁸ One of the valleys of Makkah.

⁶⁹ *Al-Hijrah an-Nabawiyah al-Mubâarakah*, by 'Abdur-Rahmân 'Abdul-Barr, p. 129.

you on your camel?" He said, 'Yes.' So they both made their camels kneel down, so that he could climb up behind him, but when they were both on the ground, they pounced on him and tied him up, then they took him to Makkah where they put him to trial, and he succumbed.⁷⁰ We used to say that Allah would not accept any good deed or repentance from one who succumbed, one who had come to know Allah then went back to *kufṛ* because of some trial that befell him. And they used to say that to themselves too. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came to Madeenah, Allah revealed these words concerning them and what we used to say about them and what they used to say about themselves:

«Say, 'O' *'Ibādi* [My slaves] who have transgressed against themselves [by committing evil deeds and sins]! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Off-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith [Islamic Monotheism] to your Lord and submit to Him [in Islam] before the torment comes upon you, [and] then you will not be helped. And follow the best of that which is sent down to you from your Lord [i.e. this Qur'an, do what it orders you to do and keep away from what it forbids], before the torment comes on you suddenly while you perceive not!» (Qur'an 39: 53-55)

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: "I wrote these words down on a piece of paper and sent them to Hishām ibn al-ʿĀṣ." Hishām said: "When it reached me, I sat down and read it in Dhu Ṭuwa (one of the valleys of Makkah), reading it over and over, but I did not understand it until I said, 'O' Allah, make me understand it.' Then Allah, the Exalted, Almighty caused me to understand that it had been revealed concerning us and what we used to say about ourselves and what others said about us. I went back to my camel and sat on it, and went

⁷⁰ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah as-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/205.

to join the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) in Madeenah.”⁷¹

This event shows us how 'Umar drew up a plan of migration for himself and his two companions, 'Ayyâsh ibn Abi Rabee'ah and Hishâm ibn al-‘Âş ibn Wâ'il as-Sahmi. Each of the three came from a different tribe, and the place where they had agreed to meet was far from Makkah, outside the boundary of the *Haram* (sanctuary), on the road to Madeenah. He stipulated the time and place clearly, so that if one of them was delayed, the other two would go on and would not wait for him, because something had prevented him from joining them. As they expected, Hishâm ibn al-‘Âş was prevented from joining them, and 'Umar and 'Ayyâsh went ahead with their migration. The plan was a complete success, and they reached Madeenah safe and sound.⁷² But Quraysh was determined to pursue the *Muhâjireen*, so they devised a well-thought-out plan which was implemented by Abu Jahl and al-Hârith, who were half-brothers of 'Ayyâsh through his mother, which was what made 'Ayyâsh trust them, especially since the matter had to do with his mother. Abu Jahl made up this story because he knew of the compassion and love that 'Ayyâsh felt towards his mother, which was clearly manifested when he agreed to go back with them. This incident also shows us the sense of danger that 'Umar (ﷺ) possessed, when his intuition told him of the kidnap plot.⁷³

It also demonstrates to us the high degree of brotherhood that had been established by Islam. 'Umar was willing to sacrifice half of his wealth for the sake of his brother's safety, because he feared that

⁷¹ *Al-Hijrah an-Nabawiyah al-Mubâarakah*, p. 131.

⁷² *At-Tarbiyah al-Qiyâdiyah*, 2/159.

⁷³ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah 'Arḍ Waqâ'i' wa Tahleel Aḥadâth* by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, p. 512.

he would be persecuted by the *mushrikeen* after he went back to Makkah. But 'Ayyāsh was overwhelmed by his feelings for his mother and his desire to honour her, so he decided to go back to Makkah and honour his mother's oath, and bring the wealth that he had left there. And his pride would not allow him to take half the wealth of his brother 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) when he had his own wealth sitting untouched in Makkah. But 'Umar was more far-sighted. It is as if he could see the misfortune that would befall 'Ayyāsh if he went back to Makkah. When he was unable to convince him, he gave him his well-trained camel. And the betrayal of the *mushrikeen* which was expected by 'Umar did indeed befall 'Ayyāsh.⁷⁴

The idea had become widespread among the Muslims that Allah would not accept any good deeds from those who were put to trial and succumbed, and remained living in the *jāhili* society. Then Allah (ﷻ) revealed the words: «Say, 'O' *Ibādi* [My slaves] who have transgressed against themselves [by committing evil deeds and sins]! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah...».

No sooner had these words been revealed but 'Umar hastened to write them down and send them to his two dear brothers, 'Ayyāsh and Hishām, so that they would try again to escape the camp of *kufr*. What a sublime attitude the son of al-Khaṭṭāb displayed. He had tried to persuade his brother 'Ayyāsh, offering him half of his wealth to convince him not to leave Madeenah, and he had given him his she-camel so that he might flee on her. Yet despite all that, he did not remind him of what he had said or tell him off for going against his opinion and rejecting his advice. On the contrary, his feelings of love and loyalty towards his brother came to the fore. No sooner has this verse been revealed but he hastened to send it to his brothers in Makkah and to all the weak and oppressed in that city, so that they

⁷⁴ *At-Tarbiyah al-Qiyādiyyah*, 2/160.

could try again to join the Muslim camp.⁷⁵

'Umar settled in Madeenah and became a sincere advisor to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) established the bond of brotherhood between him and 'Uwaym ibn Sâ'idah⁷⁶, or 'Utân ibn Mâlik⁷⁷, or Mu'âdh ibn 'Afrâ'.⁷⁸ Ibn 'Abdul-Hâdî commented on that and said: "There is no contradiction between these *ahâdeeth*, for it may be that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) established the bond of brotherhood between him and each of these men on different occasions. It is not impossible that the bond of brotherhood was established between him and each of these men on different occasions."⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Op. cit., 2/160.

⁷⁶ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, 31.

⁷⁷ *At-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/272.

⁷⁸ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, 31.

⁷⁹ *Mahḍ aş-Şawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 1/184.

CHAPTER TWO

The Qur'anic Education of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb at the Hands of the Prophet (ﷺ)

1. 'Umar and the Holy Qur'an

1.1. His concept of Allah, the universe, life, Paradise, Hell and the Divine will and decree

❖ The method by means of which 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and all the noble *Ṣaḥâbah* were educated was the Holy Qur'an which was revealed from the Lord of the Worlds. It was the only source to be accepted. The Prophet (ﷺ) was keen to ensure that the Muslims acquired their concepts from one source only. The Holy Qur'an was to be the methodology and focal point on which the Muslim individual, family and society were to be raised. The verses which 'Umar heard directly from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) played a role in the formation of his Islamic personality. They purified his heart and soul and influenced him, and he became a new man, with new values, emotions, aims, behaviour and aspirations.¹

¹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, 1/145.

Through the Qur'an, 'Umar came to know Who is the God Who must be worshipped. The Prophet (ﷺ) instilled in his heart the meanings of these verses, for he was keen to teach his Companions the correct concept of their Lord and His rights over them, knowing that this concept would generate certainty and faith when their souls were purified and their nature (*fiṭrah*) became sound. 'Umar's view of Allah, the universe, life, Paradise, Hell, the divine will and decree, the true nature of man and man's struggle with the *Shayṭān* were all based on the Holy Qur'an and the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ).

- ❖ Allah is above having any shortcomings; His are the attributes of infinite perfection. He is One, with no partner or associate, and He has no wife or child.

- ❖ He, the Exalted is the Creator, Sovereign and Controller of all things:

﴿Indeed, your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over [*Istawa*] the Throne [really in a manner that suits His Majesty]. He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and [He created] the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His Command. Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the *ʿĀlameen* [mankind, jinn and all that exists]!﴾

(*Qur'an* 7: 54)

- ❖ Allah is the source of every blessing in this universe, great or small, manifest or hidden.

﴿And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah. Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help.﴾

(*Qur'an* 16: 53)

- ❖ His knowledge encompasses all things, and nothing is hidden

from Him on earth or in heaven, nothing that man conceals or displays openly.

- ❖ Allah records man's deeds through the actions of His angels, in a book in which nothing, great or small, is omitted, rather it is recorded precisely. That will be shown to man at the appropriate time:

«Not a word does he [or she] utter but there is a watcher by him ready [to record it].» (Qur'an 50: 18)

- ❖ Allah tests His slaves with things that go against their desires and inclinations, in order to show people's essence, who among them will accept the will and decree of Allah and submit to it both outwardly and inwardly, and thus deserve the position of vicegerency and leadership, and who among them will be angry with His will and decree and thus not deserve anything and will not be given any rank.

«Who has created death and life that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving.» (Qur'an 67: 2)

- ❖ Allah grants help and support to the one who seeks His protection and follows His rulings in all that he does or abstains from:

«Verily, my *Wali* [Protector, Supporter, and Helper] is Allah Who has revealed the Book [the Qur'an], and He protects [supports and helps] the righteous.» (Qur'an 7: 196)

- ❖ His right over His slaves is that they should worship Him alone, and not join any other with Him:

«Nay! But worship Allah [Alone and none else], and be among the grateful.» (Qur'an 39: 66)

- ❖ Allah has defined the essence of this '*Uboodiyah* (servitude to Him

alone), which is the *Tawḥeed* — Islamic monotheism — that is described in the Holy Qur'an.²

'Umar's view of the universe was based on the verses:

«Say [O' Muhammad], 'Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days? And you set up rivals [in worship] with Him? That is the Lord of the *Ālameen* [mankind, jinn and all that exists]. He placed therein [i.e. the earth] firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance [for its dwellers] in four Days equal [i.e. all these four 'days' were equal in the length of time] for all those who ask [about its creation]. Then He rose over [*Istawa*] towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: Come both of you willingly or unwillingly. They both said: We come willingly. Then He completed and finished from their creation [as] seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest [lowest] heaven with lamps [stars] to be an adornment as well as to guard [from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils]. Such is the Decree of Him, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower.» (*Qur'an* 41: 9-12)

As for this life, no matter how long it lasts, it will inevitably come to an end, and no matter how great its conveniences and luxuries, they are in fact insignificant. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Verily, the likeness of [this] worldly life is as the water [rain] which We send down from the sky; so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat: until when the earth is clad in its adornments and is beautified, and its people think that they have all the powers of disposal over it, Our Command reaches it by night or by day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday! Thus do We explain the *Ayât* in detail for the people who reflect.» (*Qur'an* 10: 24)

² *Manhaj ar-Rasool fee Gharas ar-Rooḥ al-Jihâdiyah*, Pp. 10-16.

'Umar's view of Paradise was derived from the verses which describe it, and he became one of those of whom Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend [in charity in Allah's Cause] out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.» (Qur'an 32: 16-17)

His concept of Hell was derived from the Holy Qur'an, and this concept became a deterrent which prevented him from going astray from the laws of Allah. Anyone who studies the life of 'Umar will see how clear the idea of meeting Allah was in his mind, and how greatly he feared the wrath and punishment of Allah. He went out one night to check on the people of Madeenah, and he passed by the house of a Muslim man and happened to see him standing and praying. He paused to listen to his recitation, and the man recited:

«By the Ṭoor [Mount]. And by the Book Inscribed. In parchment unrolled. And by *al-Bayt al-Ma'moor* [the house over the heavens parallel to the Ka'bah at Makkah, continuously visited by the angels]. And by the roof raised high [i.e. the heaven]. And by the sea kept filled [or it will be fire kindled on the Day of Resurrection]. Verily, the Torment of your Lord will surely come to pass.» (Qur'an 52: 1-7)

He said: It is an oath and it is true, by the Lord of the Ka'bah! He dismounted and leaned against a wall, and paused there for a while, then he went back to his house, where he fell sick for a month. The people came to visit him, not knowing what had made him ill.³

His concept of the Divine will and decree was derived from the Book of Allah and the teachings of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This concept was firmly entrenched in his heart, and he understood its different categories as mentioned in the Book of Allah. He was

³ *Ar-Riqqah wa al-Buka'*, by 'Abdullāh ibn Aḥmad al-Maqdisi, p. 166.

certain that the knowledge of Allah encompasses all things:

«Neither you [O' Muhammad] do any deed nor recite any portion of the Qur'an, nor you [O' mankind] do any deed [good or evil], but We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord [so much as] the weight of an atom [or small ant] on the earth or in the heaven. Not what is less than that or what is greater than that but is [written] in a Clear Record.» (Qur'an 10: 61)

And he was certain that Allah has decreed everything that is to be:

«... Allah is not such that anything in the heavens or in the earth escapes Him. Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Omnipotent.» (Qur'an 35: 44)

And that Allah is the Creator of all things:

«Such is Allah, your Lord! *Lâ ilâha illa Huwa* [none has the right to be worshipped but He], the Creator of all things. So worship Him [Alone], and He is the *Wakeel* [Trustee, Disposer of affairs or Guardian] over all things.» (Qur'an 6: 102)

This correct understanding and deep conviction of the reality of the Divine will and decree bore many fruits which were apparent in his life, as we shall see in this book. From the Holy Qur'an he understood the reality of his own self and of all men. He knew that man's essence went back to two origins: his ancient origin when he was first created from clay, when he was formed and the soul was breathed into him, and his recent origin when he was created from a drop of sperm.⁴ Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Who made everything He has created good and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen

⁴ *Uṣool at-Tarbiyah* by al-Khalâwî, p. 31.

of despised water [male and female sexual discharge]. Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul [created by Allah for that person]; and He gave you hearing [ears], sight [eyes] and hearts. Little is the thanks you give! ﴿

(Qur'an 32: 7-9)

He understood that Allah had created man with His own hand, and honoured him with a beautiful form and an upright posture. He had blessed him with wisdom, logic and discernment, and subjugated to him all that is in the heavens and on earth. Allah favoured man over much of His creation, and honoured him by sending the Messengers to him. The most wondrous manifestation of this divine honour towards man was that He made man qualified to receive His love and good pleasure, which could be attained by following the Prophet (ﷺ) who called man to Islam so that they might live a good life in this world and attain eternal bliss in the Hereafter. Allah says:

﴿Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he [or she] is a true believer [of Islamic Monotheism] verily, to him We will give a good life [in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision], and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do [i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter].﴾

(Qur'an 16: 97)

'Umar understood the true nature of the struggle between man and the *Shayṭān*. He knew that this enemy comes to man from before and behind, from his right and from his left, and whispers to him, tempting him to commit sin, and stirring up his desires. He used to seek the help of Allah against his enemy *Iblees* and he prevailed over him throughout his life, as we shall see as we study his biography.

He learned from the story of Adam with the *Shayṭān*, as mentioned in the Qur'an, that Adam was the original man, and that the essence of Islam is absolute obedience to Allah, and that man is

vulnerable to falling into sin. From the story of Adam's sin he learned the necessity of putting one's trust in Allah, the importance of repentance and praying for forgiveness in the life of the believer, the necessity of keeping away from envy and arrogance, and the importance of speaking in the best manner to one's companions, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And say to My slaves [i.e. the true believers of Islamic Monotheism] that they should [only] say those words that are the best. [Because] *Shayṭān* [Satan] verily, sows a state of conflict and disagreements among them. Surely, *Shayṭān* [Satan] is to man a plain enemy.﴾

(*Qur'an* 17: 53)

He followed the path of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the way in which he purified his Companions' hearts and souls by means of all kinds of acts of worship, and training them to follow the guidelines for manners and attitude that were laid out in the Qur'an.

Allah blessed 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) with Islam which offered him a sound and pure belief. This replaced his former beliefs and put an end to them. Thus the pillars of idolatry collapsed: there was no drawing close to idols, no daughters of Allah, no kinship between the jinn and Allah, no soothsayers to direct the course of society and lead it into confusion and superstition, and no oblivion after death.⁵ All these notions were dispelled and replaced with belief in Allah alone, cleansed of any ideas of *shirk*, sons of Allah, soothsaying or oblivion after death. They were replaced with belief in a Hereafter in which man will finally be confronted with his deeds and will be rewarded or punished accordingly. The nonsensical *jāhili* belief in a life with no resurrection and no questioning before the Judge was replaced with belief in the Last Day and responsibility for

⁵ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb by 'Ali al-Khaṭṭāb, p. 51.

one's deeds. 'Umar was fully absorbed into this religion, and Allah and His Messenger became more beloved to him than anything or anyone else. He worshipped Allah alone with full sincerity, as if he could see Him.⁶ From the Qur'an, 'Umar began to learn everything from laws to etiquette, history to wisdom. He persisted at a steady pace, with the help of Allah, living with the Qur'an which influenced his mind, heart, soul and spirit and had an impact on his behaviour. The reason for that — after the help of Allah — was his learning at the hands of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).⁷

1.2. The coinciding of 'Umar's opinion with the Holy Qur'an, his knowledge of the reasons for revelation, and his commentary on some verses

1.2.1. The coinciding of 'Umar's opinion with the Holy Qur'an

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was one of the bravest and most courageous of the *Ṣaḥābah*. He would often ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about his decisions if he did not understand them, and he would offer his opinion and *ijtihād* with all honesty and clarity. Because of his deep understanding of the aims of the Qur'an, verses of Qur'an were revealed which coincided with his opinion in some instances. 'Umar said: "My opinion coincided with that of Allah — or of my Lord — in three matters. I said, «O' Messenger of Allah, why don't you take Maqām Ibrāheem as a place of prayer?", then Allah revealed that. And I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, both righteous and immoral people enter upon you; why don't you tell the Mothers of the

⁶ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, *Ḥayātuhu, 'Ilmuhu, Adabuhu*, p. 51.

⁷ Ibid, p. 52.

Believers to observe *ḥijāb*?' and Allah revealed the verse of *ḥijāb*. And I heard that the Prophet (ﷺ) had rebuked some of his wives, so I went to them and said, 'Either you stop, or Allah will give His Messenger (wives) who are better than you.' I went to one of his wives and she said, 'O 'Umar, don't you think that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is able to exhort his wives? Why are you speaking to them?'⁸ Then Allah revealed the words:

«It may be if he divorced you [all] that his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you — Muslims [who submit to Allah], believers, obedient [to Allah], turning to Allah in repentance, worshipping Allah sincerely, given to fasting or emigrants [for Allah's sake], previously married and virgins.» (*Qur'an* 66: 5)»

1.2.2. Not offering the funeral prayer for the hypocrites

'Umar said: «When 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy died, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was called to offer the funeral prayer for him. He went there and when he stood to offer the prayer for him, I went and stood in front of him and said: "O' Messenger of Allah, are you going to offer the funeral prayer for the enemy of Allah 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy, who said such and such on such and such a day?" and I listed his evil deeds, whilst the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) smiled, until I had said too much. Then he said, "Get away from me, O' 'Umar, for I have been given the choice and I have made my choice. It was said to me,

«Whether you [O' Muhammad] ask forgiveness for them [hypocrites] or ask not forgiveness for them — [and even] if you ask seventy times for their forgiveness — Allah will not forgive them because they have disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger

⁸ Bukhari, *Kitāb at-Tafseer*, hadith no. 4213.

[Muhammad]. And Allah guides not those people who are *Fâsiqoon* [rebellious, disobedient to Allah].» (Qur'an 9: 80)

If I knew that by asking more than seventy times for his forgiveness he would be forgiven, I would ask more than seventy times." Then he offered the funeral prayer for him and accompanied him to his grave, until the burial was finished. I started to wonder at my own audacity in speaking to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in this manner, but Allah and His Messenger knew best. It was not long before this verse was revealed:

«And never [O' Muhammad] pray [funeral prayer] for any of them [hypocrites] who dies, nor stand at his grave...» (Qur'an 9: 84)

After that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not offer the funeral prayer for any hypocrite, nor did he stand at his grave, until Allah took his soul.»⁹

1.2.3. The prisoners of Badr

'Umar said: «On the day of Badr, when Allah defeated the *mushrikeen* and seventy of them were killed and seventy taken prisoner, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) consulted Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali. He said to me: "What do you think, O' son of al-Khaṭṭâb?" I said, "I think that you should let me deal with So and so — a relative of 'Umar's — and I will strike his neck (kill him); and you should let 'Ali deal with 'Aqeel¹⁰ and strike his neck; and you should let Ḥamzah deal with So and so and strike his neck, so that Allah will know that there is no inclination in our hearts towards the *mushrikeen*, for these are their leaders and chiefs." The Messenger of

⁹ Muslim, hadith no. 2400; *Akhbâr 'Umar* by at-Ṭanṭâwiyân, Pp. 380, 381.

¹⁰ 'Aqeel ibn Abi Ṭâlib al-Hâshimi; he became Muslim on the day of the Conquest of Makkah, and died at the beginning of the caliphate of Yazeed.

Allah (ﷻ) did not like what I said, and he accepted the ransom from them. The next day I went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he and Abu Bakr were sitting there, weeping. I said, "O' Messenger of Allah, what has made you and your Companion weep? If I can, I will weep with you, and if I cannot then I will pretend to weep." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Because of what your companions suggested of accepting the ransom, your punishment was shown to me closer than this tree." Then Allah revealed the words:

«It is not for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war [and free them with ransom] until he had made a great slaughter [among his enemies] in the land. You desire the good of this world [i.e. the money of ransom for freeing the captives], but Allah desires [for you] the Hereafter. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. Were it not a previous ordainment from Allah, a severe torment would have touched you for what you took.» *(Qur'an 8: 67-68)*

The following year, seventy of them were killed, and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fled; his tooth was broken and his helmet smashed, and blood flowed down his face. Then Allah revealed the words:

«[What is the matter with you?] When a single disaster smites you, although you smote [your enemies] with one twice as great, you say: 'From where does this come to us?' Say [to them], 'It is from yourselves [because of your evil deeds]' — because of your accepting the ransom. And Allah has power over all things.» *(Qur'an 3: 165).»¹¹*

¹¹ *Musnad Ahmad*, 1/250, hadith no. 221; classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Ahmad Shâkir. A similar report was narrated by Muslim, hadith no. 1763.

1.2.4. Seeking permission to enter

The Prophet (ﷺ) sent a slave from among the Anṣār to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb at noon time to call him. He entered his house when he was sleeping and part of his body had become uncovered. He said: "O' Allah, forbid people to enter our houses at the time when we are sleeping." According to another report he said: "O' Messenger of Allah, I wish that Allah would give us some commands and prohibitions with regard to asking permission to enter."¹² Then the words were revealed:

«O' you who believe! Let your slaves and slave-girls, and those among you who have not come to the age of puberty ask your permission [before they come to your presence] on three occasions: before *Fajr* [morning] *Ṣalâh* [prayer], and while you put off your clothes for the noonday [rest], and after the '*Ishâ*' [night] *Ṣalâh* [prayer]...»
(*Qur'an* 24: 58)

1.2.5. 'Umar and his prayer that alcohol be forbidden

When Allah (ﷻ) revealed the verse:

«They ask you [O' Muhammad] concerning alcoholic drink and gambling...»
(*Qur'an* 2: 219)

'Umar said: «"O' Allah, clarify the issue of alcohol for us once and for all." Then the verse in *Soorah an-Nisâ*' was revealed:

«O' you who believe! Approach not *aṣ-Ṣalâh* [the prayer] when you are in a drunken state....»
(*Qur'an* 4: 43)

When giving the *iqâmah* (call immediately preceding the prayer), the

¹² *Ar-Riyâḍ an-Naḍrah*, p. 332. Its isnad is *ḍa'eef*, and al-Wâqidî quoted it without an isnad.

caller of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would cry out that no drunken person should approach the prayer. 'Umar was called and this verse was recited to him, and he said: "O Allah, clarify the issue of alcohol for us once and for all." Then the verse in *Soorah al-Mā'idah* was revealed, and 'Umar was called and it was recited to him. When he reached the words, ﴿So, will you not then abstain?﴾ (*Qur'an* 5: 91). 'Umar said, "We have abstained, we have abstained."¹³

So the prohibition of alcohol was approached in a gradual manner, and from the words ﴿So, will you not then abstain?﴾ (*Qur'an* 5: 91). 'Umar understood that this rhetorical question was in fact a prohibition, because this question was more powerful and more definitive than a prohibition expressed in the usual style. From the wording and context of the verse it is as clear as day that this is a prohibition.¹⁴

1.2.6. His knowledge of the reasons for revelation

'Umar memorized the entire Qur'an during a period that began with his conversion and ended with the death of the Messenger (ﷺ). He memorized it along with the reasons for revelation, except for those verses that had been revealed before he became Muslim, which he learned in general terms.

We would not be exaggerating if we said that 'Umar knew many of the reasons for revelation, especially during the part of his life when he was Muslim. Because he was so close to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), learning directly from him, and because he learned from him what he had missed of the Qur'an, he acquired deep knowledge of the reasons for revelation when the Qur'an was still

¹³ Classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Aḥmad Shākir in his analysis of the *aḥādeeth* of *al-Musnad*, hadith no. 378.

¹⁴ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb* by at-Talmasāni, p. 101.

fresh and events were still unfolding in front of him. Thus the matter was something easy for him.¹⁵

'Umar himself was the reason for the revelation of more than one verse, some of which are known by scholarly consensus to have been revealed in Makkah and others which are similarly known to have been revealed in Madeenah. In the case of some verses, 'Umar knew precisely where and when they were revealed. He said concerning the verse:

«This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.»
(*Qur'an* 5: 3)

«By Allah, I know exactly the day on which this was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and the hour at which it was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was in the evening of 'Arafah on a Friday.»¹⁶ 'Umar — alone or with others — was the direct reason for the revelation of several verses, including the passage in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of *al-Masjid al-Ḥarām* [at Makkah] as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah? They are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the *Dhālimoon* [polytheists and wrongdoers]. Those who believed [in the Oneness of Allah — Islamic Monotheism] and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives, are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them

¹⁵ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Dr. 'Alī al-Khaṭṭīb, Pp. 90-92.

¹⁶ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim. *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*, *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 188.

glad tidings of mercy from Him, and His being pleased [with them], and of Gardens [Paradise] for them wherein are everlasting delights. They will dwell therein forever. Verily, with Allah is a great reward.﴾

(*Qur'an* 9: 19-22)

In *aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥ* it is narrated that a man said: «“I do not care if I do not do anything after becoming Muslim apart from taking care of *al-Masjid al-Ḥarām*.” ‘Alī ibn Abi Ṭālib (ؓ) said, “Jihad for the sake of Allah is better than all of that.” ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, “Do not raise your voices by the *minbar* of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). When the prayer is over, I will ask him about that.” So he asked him, and Allah revealed this verse, explaining to them that faith and jihad are better than maintaining *al-Masjid al-Ḥarām*, Ḥajj, ‘Umrah, *ṭawāf* and treating the pilgrims kindly by providing them with water. Hence Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) said, “If I were to stand guard on the border for the sake of Allah for one night, that would be dearer to me than spending *Laylat al-Qadr* in prayer at the Black Stone.”»¹⁷

1.2.7. ‘Umar’s asking the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about some verses

‘Umar (ؓ) used to ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about some verses, and sometimes he would hear another *Ṣaḥābi* asking the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about some verses, and he would memorize the answers and teach them to whomever he wanted of those who sought knowledge.

It was narrated that Ya‘la ibn Umayyah said: «I asked ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: «... there is no sin on you if you shorten *aṣ-Ṣalāh* [the prayer] if you fear that the disbelievers may put you in trial [attack you]...» (*Qur'an* 4: 101) But the people are safe now.” ‘Umar said to

¹⁷ *Al-Fatāwa*, 28/10.

me: "I wondered the same thing, so I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about that, and he said, 'It is a charity that Allah has bestowed upon you, so accept His charity.'"¹⁸

And 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) was asked about this verse:

«And [remember] when your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed [or from Adam's loin his offspring]...»
(Qur'an 7:172)

«'Umar said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) being asked about it and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Allah created Adam, then He wiped his back with His right hand and brought forth from him his progeny and said, 'I have created these for Paradise and they will do the deeds of the people of Paradise.' Then He wiped his back (again) and brought forth (more of) his progeny and said, 'I have created these for Hell and they will do the deeds of the people of Hell.'"¹⁹ A man said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, why then should we strive?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'If Allah creates a person for Paradise, He will make him do the deeds of the people of Paradise, until he dies doing one of the deeds of the people of Paradise and is admitted thereby to Paradise, and if He creates a person for Hell, He will make him do the deeds of the people of Hell, until he dies doing one of the deeds of the people of Hell and is admitted thereby to Hell.'"¹⁹

When Allah (ﷻ) revealed the verse:

«Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs.»
(Qur'an 54: 45),

¹⁸ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim. *Musnad Aḥmad* hadith no. 174; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*.

¹⁹ It is *ṣaḥeeḥ* because of corroborating evidence (*ṣaḥeeḥ lee ghayrihi*). *Musnad Aḥmad* hadith no. 311; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*.

'Umar was asked: "Which multitude will be put to flight? Which multitude will be defeated?" 'Umar said, "On the day of Badr, I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) standing firm with his shield, saying, «Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs». Then I understood the meaning of this verse."²⁰

1.2.8. 'Umar's commentary on some verses

'Umar would try to avoid commenting on Qur'an on the basis of his own opinion. Hence when he was asked about the verse, «By [the winds] that scatter dust» (*Qur'an* 51: 1), he said: "It means the wind, and were it not that I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say that, I would not have said it." He was asked about the verse, «And [the clouds] that bear heavy weight of water» (*Qur'an* 51: 2), and he said: "It means the clouds, and were it not that I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say that, I would not have said it." He was asked about the verse, «And [the ships] that float with ease and gentleness» (*Qur'an* 51: 3). He said: "It means ships, and were it not that I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say that, I would not have said it." He was asked about the verse, «And those [angels] who distribute [provisions, rain, and other blessings] by [Allah's] Command» (*Qur'an* 51: 4). He said: "It means the angels, and were it not that I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say that, I would not have said it."²¹

'Umar had a particular methodology in commenting on verses of Qur'an. If he knew that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had commented on a verse, he would follow his commentary, which is the best way. We have seen an example of this above. If he did not know

²⁰ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 4/266.

²¹ *Akhbâr 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by at-Ṭanṭâwiyân, p. 308, quoting from *ar-Riyâḍ an-Naḍrah*.

of any comment by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), he would check with the knowledgeable people among the *Ṣaḥābah*, such as Ibn 'Abbās, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood, Mu'ādh and others (may Allah be pleased with them all). The following is an example of that.

One day 'Umar said to the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ): «Concerning what do you think this verse was revealed:

﴿Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines, with rivers flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruits for him therein, while he is stricken with old age, and his children are weak [not able to look after themselves], then it is struck with a fiery whirlwind, so that it is burnt? Thus does Allah make clear His *Āyāt* [proofs, evidences, verses] to you that you may give thought.﴾

(*Qur'an* 2: 266)?

They said: "Allah knows best." 'Umar became angry and said, "Say we know or we do not know." Ibn 'Abbās said, "I think I have an idea about it, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar said, "O' son of my brother, speak and do not belittle yourself." Ibn 'Abbās said, "It is the similitude of some deed." 'Umar said, "Which deed?" Ibn 'Abbās said, "Some deed." 'Umar said, "(It is a similitude of) a rich man who strives to obey Allah, then Allah sends the *Shayṭān* to him and he starts to commit sin until his good deeds are destroyed."»²² According to another report, Ibn 'Abbās said, "This is referring to deeds, for the son of Adam is most in need of his garden when he has grown old and has numerous dependents, and the son of Adam is most in need of his good deeds on the day when he is resurrected." 'Umar said, "You have spoken correctly, O' son of my brother."²³

²² *Faṭḥ al-Bāri*, 8/49.

²³ *al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah wa al-Dawlah al-Umawiyah*, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya, p. 305.

'Umar also commented on some other verses, such as the passage:

«Who, when afflicted with calamity, say, 'Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.' They are those on whom are the *Ṣalawât* [i.e. who are blessed and will be forgiven] from their Lord, and [they are those who] receive His Mercy, and it is they who are the guided ones.» (Qur'an 2: 156-157)

'Umar said: "What a good reward and what a good bonus."²⁴ What he meant by reward was blessings and mercy, and what he meant by bonus was right guidance.²⁵

He heard someone reciting the verse, «O' man! What has made you careless about your Lord, the Most Generous?» (Qur'an 82: 6) and said: "This means ignorance."²⁶

He explained the verse, «And when the souls are joined with their bodies [the good with the good and the bad with the bad]» (Qur'an 81: 7), by saying: "Evildoers with evildoers and righteous with righteous."²⁷

He explained the verse, «Turn to Allah with sincere repentance» (Qur'an 66: 8), by saying: "(This means) repenting and not going back to sin; that is the complete repentance that is required."²⁸

One day he passed by the cell of a monk and called him, saying, "O' monk!" The monk looked out and 'Umar began to look at him and weep. It was said to him, "O' Ameer al-Mu'mineen, why are you weeping for him?" He said: "I remembered the words of

²⁴ *al-Mustadrak*, 2/270.

²⁵ *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah wa ad-Dawlah al-Umawiyah*, p. 305.

²⁶ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 4/513.

²⁷ *Al-Fatāwa*, 7/44.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 11/382.

Allah in His Book: ﴿Labouring [hard in the worldly life by worshipping others besides Allah], weary [in the Hereafter with humiliation and disgrace]. They will enter in the hot blazing Fire﴾ (Qur'an 88: 3-4). That is what made me weep."²⁹

And he interpreted *jibt* as meaning witchcraft and *tāghoot* as meaning the *Shayṭān*, in the verse, ﴿They believe in *Jibt* and *Tāghoot*﴾ (Qur'an 4: 51).³⁰

2. His Keeping Company with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

'Umar was one of the Makkans who could read and write in an illiterate society, which is indicative of his keenness to acquire knowledge from an early age. He strove to become one of the few, those who became literate and educated themselves, thus occupying a prominent position at the time of the Prophethood due to a combination of qualities including the ability to read and write, which was something that meant a great deal at that time.

'Umar received his early education, and learned how to read and write, at the hands of Ḥarb ibn Umayyah, the father of Abu Sufiyan.³¹ This distinction qualified him to acquire the education and knowledge that was available at that time. However we are certain that the strongest factor that influenced 'Umar's personality, honed his talents, sparked his potential and purified his soul was his keeping company with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and studying at his hands. 'Umar stayed close to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Makkah after

²⁹ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 4/537.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 1/524.

³¹ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Dr. Muhammad Aḥmad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 87.

he became Muslim, and he stayed close to him in Madeenah too. 'Umar lived in al-'Awālī, which was originally on the outskirts of Madeenah — although now it has become part of it, and now abuts the Prophet's Mosque, following the expansion of the Mosque. In this place he organized himself and was keen to study all aspects of knowledge at the hands of the Teacher and Guide of Mankind, whom Allah had taught and taught well. He did not miss any knowledge of Qur'an, any hadith, command, event or exhortation. 'Umar said: "I had a neighbour from among the Anṣār, from Banu Umayyah ibn Zayd, who lived in al-'Awālī in Madeenah. He and I would take it in turns to go down to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He would go down one day and I would go down the next. When I went down I would bring him the day's news of Revelation and other matters, and when he went down he would do likewise."³²

This reports points to the abundant wellspring from which 'Umar derived his knowledge and education. It was the Book of Allah which was being revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in stages, according to events. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would recite it to his Companions, who learned its meanings and understood it in detail, and were greatly influenced by its principles. It had a deep impact on their hearts, minds and souls. 'Umar was one of those who were influenced by the Qur'anic method of education. Everyone who studies the history of 'Umar should pause and ponder this pure, divine wellspring which nourished their talents and brought their genius to the fore, and caused people's knowledge to grow. What we are speaking of here is the Holy Qur'an.

From the time he became Muslim, 'Umar was keen to memorize Qur'an and to understand it and ponder its meanings. He remained close to the Messenger, learning what was revealed to him,

³² Op. cit., p. 87.

until he had memorized all the verses and *Soorahs* of the Qur'an. The Prophet (ﷺ) taught him one recitation of the Qur'an and he was keen to adhere to the recitation that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had taught him.³³ On occasion, 'Umar had the honour of being the first one to hear some verses as soon as they had been revealed. He was also very keen to study and review what he had memorized.³⁴ 'Umar was trained according to the Qur'anic method and the one who taught him was the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The starting point in 'Umar's education came when he met the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and underwent a sudden and marvellous transformation as soon as he met the Prophet (ﷺ), coming forth from darkness into light, acquiring faith and shunning *kufr*. He was able to bear hardships for the sake of his new religion and its pure beliefs. The personality of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was the main attraction to Islam, for he possessed the ability to attract and influence others. Allah has prepared him and moulded him and made him the most perfect human being in the history of the world. Greatness is always loved and admired by people; admirers gather around it and remain attached to it, because of that love and admiration. But in the case of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), added to that greatness was the fact that he was the Messenger of Allah, the one who received revelation from Allah and conveyed it to mankind. This added a further dimension to the impact on the believer's feelings towards him. He was not loved only for himself as great men are loved, but also for that divine connection. For when a believer was in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), he was also in the presence of Divine revelation. So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was both a great human being and a great Messenger; these two qualities ultimately combined and became one, with no distinction between them. Thus

³³ Op. cit., p. 88.

³⁴ Ibid.

the believer's love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was love for the Messenger as a human being and for the human being as a Messenger. Love for Allah was connected to love for His Messenger, and the two joined together in the believer's heart, becoming the focal point of all his emotions and the basis for his behaviour and attitudes.

This love that motivated the first generation of the *Ṣaḥābah* is the focus and starting point of Islamic education.³⁵ Through the blessing of keeping company with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and learning at his hands, the *Ṣaḥābah* attained a high level of faith. Sayyid Quṭb says concerning this purification and education:

"It was indeed a purification. That is what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did with them to purify their hearts and their emotions, their deeds and behaviour, their marital and social lives. It was a purification that lifted their souls from belief in *shirk* to belief in *Tawḥeed*, from false notions to true belief, from nonsensical myths to clear certainty. It raised them from the filth of immorality to the purity of faith, from the filth of *riba* (usury) and *ḥarām* earnings to the purity of *ḥalāl* income. It was a complete purification of the individual and the society, of their hearts and deeds, a purification which raised man and all his concepts of life, himself and his origins to the realm of light where he is connected with his Lord and the (angels) on high."³⁶

'Umar studied at the hands of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and learned from him the Qur'an and Sunnah, the rules of recitation (*tilāwah*) and how souls are purified. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Indeed, Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He

³⁵ *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyah* by Muhammad Quṭb, Pp. 34, 35.

³⁶ *Adh-Dhilāl*, 6/3565.

sent among them a Messenger [Muhammad] from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses [the Qur'an], and purifying them [from sins by their following him], and instructing them [in] the Book [the Qur'an] and *al-Ḥikmah* [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet (i.e. his legal ways, statements and acts of worship)], while before that they had been in manifest error.﴾

(Qur'an 3: 164)

He was keen to understand the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) with regard to war and peace.

'Umar developed a deep knowledge of the Sunnah, which gave him a solid understanding of Islam. He stayed with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and listened to him and learned from him. When he sat in a gathering with the Prophet (ﷺ), he would not leave that gathering until it ended. He was also keen to ask the Prophet (ﷺ) about anything that bothered him.³⁷ From the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) he acquired knowledge of the aims of this great religion. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) paid special attention to him and took care of him. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) testified to his knowledge, as he said: «“Whilst I was sleeping, a cup of milk was brought to me and I drank from it until I could see its wetness emerging from my fingertips, then I gave the leftovers to 'Umar.” They said: “How did you interpret that, O' Messenger of Allah?” He said: “(It refers to) knowledge.”»³⁸

Ibn Hajar said: “What is meant by knowledge here is knowledge of how to deal with people according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).”³⁹ This knowledge could not be acquired by anyone except one who strove hard to learn that which

³⁷ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Dr. Muḥammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 91.

³⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 3681.

³⁹ *Faṭḥ al-Bâri*, 7/36.

might help him to understand the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. The means to achieve that are: immersing oneself in study of Arabic language and literature, and being acquainted with all its literary styles, as well as acquiring all the knowledge and experience that will enable one to understand it. Such was 'Umar.⁴⁰

There was a deep love between the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and 'Umar, and love is an important factor in creating a suitable atmosphere between teacher and student that will produce the best results. 'Umar loved the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) deeply and prepared to sacrifice himself for him. It is narrated in the hadith that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“No one of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his son and all the people.”⁴¹ 'Umar said to him, “By Allah, O' Messenger of Allah, you are more beloved to me than everyone except myself.” He said, “No, O' 'Umar, not until I am more beloved to you than your own self.” He ('Umar) said, “You are more beloved to me than my own self.” He said, “Now (you have got it right), O' 'Umar.”»⁴²

«One day, 'Umar asked permission to perform 'Umrah, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him: “Do not forget us in your *du'ā*, O' my brother.”⁴³ 'Umar said, “There is nothing else under the sun that is dearer to me than the fact that he said, ‘O' my brother’.”»⁴⁴

This sublime love is what made him stay close to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) during all his battles. That gave him a great

⁴⁰ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Dr. Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 93.

⁴¹ Bukhari, hadith no. 15.

⁴² Bukhari, hadith no. 6632.

⁴³ Abu Dawood, *aṣ-Ṣalāh*, no. 1498; Tirmidhi, *ad-Da'wāt*, hadith no. 3562 (he said: this is a *ṣaḥeeḥ ḥasan* hadith); Ibn Mājah, *al-Manāsik*, hadith no. 2894. All these reports were narrated from 'Umar, but there are those who class them as *ḍa'eef* (weak).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

deal of training in the affairs of war, and brought him much knowledge of the nature and inclinations of human beings. His staying close to the Prophet (ﷺ) and speaking to him made him become eloquent, fluent and clear of speech, and granted him the ability to say things in a variety of styles.⁴⁵ In this book we will see his attitude in battle when fighting alongside the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and some glimpses of his social life during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ).

2.1. 'Umar on the battlefield with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

The scholars are agreed that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was present at Badr and Uhud and all the other battles at which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was present; he did not miss any battle or campaign in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought.⁴⁶

2.1.1. The battle of Badr

'Umar took part in the Battle of Badr. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) consulted his Companions before the battle, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was the first one to speak, and he spoke well and called for fighting the *kāfirs*. Then 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) spoke, and he spoke well and called for fighting the *kāfirs*.⁴⁷ The first Muslim to be martyred on the day of Badr was Mihja'⁴⁸, the freed slave of 'Umar.⁴⁹ 'Umar ibn al-

⁴⁵ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Dr. Muḥammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 94.

⁴⁶ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 89.

⁴⁷ *Al-Fārooq ma'a an-Nabi*, by Dr. Aṭif Lamāḍah, p. 32.

⁴⁸ *At-Ṭabaqāt* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/391, 392; this report is *ḍa'eef* (weak) because of interruptions in its isnaad.

⁴⁹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 2/388; *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq*, p. 187.

Khaṭṭāb killed his maternal uncle al-‘Āṣ ibn Hishām⁵⁰, not caring at all about any ties of kinship with him in comparison to the ties of faith. Indeed he used to boast about that, as a means of affirming this principle. After the battle ended, he suggested killing the *mushrik* prisoners of war. This event offers great lessons which I have discussed in my book on the Prophet's biography which is entitled *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah 'Araḍ Waqâ'i' wa Tahleel Ahadâth*.

When al-‘Abbās, the paternal uncle of the Prophet (ﷺ), was taken captive, ‘Umar was keen for him to be guided to Islam, and he said to him: “O ‘Abbās, become Muslim, for by Allah, if you become Muslim that will be dearer to me than if al-Khaṭṭāb were to become Muslim. That is only because I saw that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) wishes that you would become Muslim.”⁵¹

Also among the prisoners was Suhayl ibn ‘Amr, the spokesman of Quraysh. ‘Umar said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): “O Messenger of Allah, let me knock out the front teeth of Suhayl ibn ‘Amr so that his tongue will protrude and he will never stand and deliver speeches against you in any place.” The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “I will not mutilate him lest Allah mutilate me even though I am a Prophet. Perhaps there will come a time when he will stand and speak in such a way that you will not be able to criticize him.”⁵² And this is in fact what happened after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) passed away. A number of the people of Makkah thought of apostatizing from Islam, and the governor of Makkah, ‘Atâb ibn Usayd, was afraid of them and hid himself. Suhayl ibn ‘Amr stood up and praised and glorified Allah, then he mentioned the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: “That only makes Islam stronger, for whoever

⁵⁰ *Al-Khilāfah wa al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen* by al-Bahnasāwī, p. 154.

⁵¹ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 3/298.

⁵² *Ibid*, 3/311.

causes trouble, we will strike his neck (kill him).” So the people gave up that idea.⁵³

‘Umar narrated a hadith which he heard from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), when he addressed the *mushrikeen* of Makkah who had been killed at Badr. It was narrated that Anas said: «“We were with ‘Umar between Makkah and Madeenah, watching for the new moon. I had good eyesight, and I saw it and said to ‘Umar, ‘Don’t you see it?’ He said, ‘I will see it when I am lying in my bed.’ Then he started telling us about the people of Badr. He said, ‘The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) started to show us where they (the *mushrikeen*) would fall the following day, saying, ‘This is where So and so will fall tomorrow if Allah wills, this is where So and so will fall tomorrow, if Allah wills.’ And they fell in those places. I said, ‘By the One Who sent you with the truth, they fell in those places.’ They fell there, then he ordered that they be thrown into a dry well. Then he went towards them and said, ‘O’ So and so, O’ So and so, have you found what your Lord promised you to be true? For I have found what my Lord promised me to be true.’ ‘Umar said, ‘O’ Messenger of Allah, are you speaking to people who have become rotten corpses?’ He said, ‘You do not hear what I am saying any better than they do, but they cannot answer’.”»⁵⁴

When ‘Umayr ibn Wahb came to Madeenah, before he was Muslim, seeking to kill the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) after the battle of Badr, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was among a group of Muslims who were talking about the day of Badr and remembering how Allah had honoured them and granted victory to them. When ‘Umar spotted ‘Umayr ibn Wahb, who had made his camel kneel at the door of the mosque and had his sword by his side, he said: “This dog is the

⁵³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi* by al-Humaydi, 4/181.

⁵⁴ *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 182, *al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Fiqhiyah*. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeḥ* according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim.

enemy of Allah 'Umayr ibn Wahb! He has only come for some evil purpose and he is the one who stirred up trouble for us on the day of Badr." Then he went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: «"O' Prophet of Allah, this enemy of Allah, 'Umayr ibn Wahb, has come with his sword by his side." He said: "Bring him in to me." 'Umar went and took hold of the strap of his sword that was around his neck, and said to the Anṣār who were with him: "Come in to where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is and sit with him, and guard him against this evildoer, for he is not to be trusted." Then he took him in to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saw him, with 'Umar holding on to the strap of his sword which was around his neck, he said: "Let him go, O' 'Umar. Come here, O' 'Umayr." So he came closer and said, "*An'imu ṣabāhan* (good morning)," which was the greeting of the people of *Jāhiliyah*. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Allah has honoured us with a greeting that is better than your greeting, O' 'Umayr; (it is) *salām*, the greeting of the people of Paradise."⁵⁵ He asked: "Why have you come, O' 'Umayr?" He said: "I have come because of that prisoner whom you are holding; treat him well." He asked: "What is this sword around your neck?" He answered: "What useless swords they are! Did they help us in any way?" He (the Prophet) asked: "Tell me the truth, why have you come?" He answered: "I only came because of that (prisoner)." He said: "No, rather you sat down with Safwān ibn Umayyah in al-Ḥijr, and you spoke about the people in the well at Badr, then you said, 'Were it not that I have debts and dependents, I would go out and kill Muhammad.' So Safwān ibn Umayyah took responsibility for your debts and dependents, on condition that you kill me for him. But Allah is protecting me from you." 'Umayr said: "I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah, for, O' Messenger of Allah, we disbelieved the news that you brought from

⁵⁵ See *Ṣaḥeeḥ as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by al-'Ali, p. 259.

heaven and the revelation that came down to you. But this is a matter in which no one else was present except Safwân and myself. By Allah I know that no one gave this knowledge to you except Allah. Praise be to Allah Who has guided me to Islam. Allah caused me to come here." Then he spoke the words of truth and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Teach him his religion, teach him Qur'an and set his prisoner free."» So they did that.⁵⁶

From this story we can see the sense of security that was a distinguishing characteristic of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). He noticed the arrival of 'Umayr ibn Wahb and alerted others, and declared that he was a devil who had only come for an evil purpose. His history was known to 'Umar, for he had persecuted the Muslims in Makkah, and he was the one who had incited (the *mushrikeen*) to fight the Muslims at Badr and had gathered information about their numbers. Hence 'Umar began to take steps to protect the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and what he did was to hold 'Umayr firmly by the strap of the sword that was around his neck, thus preventing the possibility of him using that sword to attack the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). And he ordered a number of the *Ṣaḥâbah* to guard the Prophet (ﷺ).⁵⁷

2.1.2. The battles of Uḥud, Banu Muṣṭalaq and al-Khandaq

Among the attributes that 'Umar displayed in jihad were high ambition, a refusal to feel belittled and a determination to rise above humiliation when defeat seemed imminent, as happened in the battle of Uḥud, the second major battle that he fought alongside the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). At the end of the battle, when Abu Sufiyân

⁵⁶ *Ṣaḥeeḥ as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, p. 360.

⁵⁷ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, 'Arad Wâqi' wa Tahleel Ahâdâth by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, p. 868.

stood up and said: «“Is Muhammad among the people?” The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “Do not answer him.” He then asked, “Is the son of Abu Quḥāfah among the people?” He (ﷺ) said, “Do not answer him.” He (Abu Sufiyān) asked: “Is the son of al-Khaṭṭāb among the people?” Then Abu Sufiyān said: “These people must have been killed, for if they were alive they would have answered.” Then ‘Umar could not help saying, “You are lying, O’ enemy of Allah! Allah has kept for you that which will bring you humiliation.” Abu Sufiyān said: “Hubal has prevailed.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Answer him.” They asked: “What should we say?” He said: “Say, Allah is All-Great and more sublime.” Abu Sufiyān said: “We have al-‘Uzza and you have no ‘Uzza.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Answer him.” They asked the Prophet: “What should we say?” He (ﷺ) said: “Say, Allah is our Guardian and you have no Guardian.” Abu Sufiyān said: “A day for the day of Badr; the war is not over. You will find mutilation that I did not order, but it did not upset me.”»⁵⁸ According to another report, ‘Umar said: “There is no comparison. Our slain are in Paradise and your slain are in Hell.”⁵⁹ Abu Sufiyān came to him and said: “I adjure you by Allah, O’ ‘Umar, did we kill Muhammad?” ‘Umar said, “No, by Allah. He is listening to what you say now.” He said: “I believe you more than I believe Ibn Qami’ah” — for Ibn Qami’ah had said to them, “I killed Muhammad.”⁶⁰

The fact that Abu Sufiyān asked about the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and ‘Umar clearly indicates that the *mushrikeen* were concerned about these three more than any others, because they knew that they were the leaders of Islam, by whose efforts Islam had become established; they were the pillars of its state and system. The

⁵⁸ Bukhari, *al-Maghāzi*, hadith no. 4040; *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, 2/392.

⁵⁹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/392.

⁶⁰ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayāt al-Fārooq*, p. 189.

mushrikeen thought that if they died, Islam would not survive. The silence in response to Abu Sufiyān's initial questions was aimed at belittling him, but when he began to express joy and arrogance, they told him what was really the case and responded to him with courage.⁶¹

During the battle of Banu al-Muṣṭalaq, 'Umar played a distinguished role. We will let an eyewitness tell us what he saw. Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī said: "We were on a campaign and a man from among the *Muhājireen* kicked a man from among the Anṣār. The Anṣārī said: "Help me, O' Anṣār!" and the *Muhājir* said, "Help me, O' *Muhājireen*!" (seeking their support in a fight). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) heard that and said: "Stop it, for it (i.e., tribalism) is no good." 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy heard about that and said: "Have they gone so far? When we go back to Madeenah, the more honourable (meaning himself) will expel therefrom the meaner [meaning the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)]." 'Umar heard that and went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: "O' Messenger of Allah, let me strike the neck of this hypocrite!" The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Leave him alone. Let it not be said that Muhammad is killing his Companions."⁶²

According to another report, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: "Tell 'Abbād ibn Bishr to kill him ('Abdullāh ibn Ubayy)." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him: "What do you think, O' 'Umar, if the people start saying that Muhammad is killing his Companions? No. rather tell the people that it is time to move on." That was at a time when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would not ordinarily have moved on, but the people moved on.⁶³ From the attitude and instructions of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'Umar understood that it was the matter of pros and cons. This is clear from the words of the Prophet

⁶¹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/392.

⁶² *Ibid*, 2/409.

⁶³ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 3/319.

(ﷺ): “What do you think, O’ ‘Umar, if the people start saying that Muhammad is killing his Companions?”⁶⁴ The aim here was to protect his political reputation and preserve internal unity. There was a huge difference between the people speaking about the love that the Companions of Muhammad had for Muhammad (ﷺ), as was affirmed by their leader Abu Sufiyān who said, “I have never seen anyone love anyone as much as the Companions of Muhammad love Muhammad,”⁶⁵ and the people saying that Muhammad was killing his Companions. No doubt if that had happened, there would have been attempts on the part of the enemy to infiltrate the Muslims in Madeenah, as they would not be despairing of ever achieving anything in the face of such love and devotion.⁶⁶

During the battle of al-Khandaq, Jābir narrated that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came on the day of al-Khandaq after the sun had set, and he started to curse the *kuffār* of Quraysh and said: “O’ Messenger of Allah, I could hardly pray until the sun had almost set.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I too have not prayed, by Allah.” So we went down into the valley of Buṭ-ḥan. He did *wuḍoo’* — ablution — for prayer and we did likewise. Then he prayed ‘*Aṣr* after the sun had set, and after that he prayed *Maghrib*.⁶⁷

2.1.3. The treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah, the march to Hawāzin, and the battle of Khaybar

In al-Ḥudaybiyah, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called ‘Umar to send him to Makkah and tell the leaders of Quraysh why he had come. He said: “O’ Messenger of Allah, I am afraid that Quraysh may kill me, for there is no one of Banu ‘Adiyy ibn Ka‘b in Makkah

⁶⁴ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/409.

⁶⁵ *At-Tarbiyah al-Qiyādiyah*, 3/463.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 3/463.

⁶⁷ Bukhari, *hadith* no. 571.

who can protect me. Quraysh knows of my enmity and harsh attitude towards them. But I will tell you of a man who is more able to do that than me: 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān." So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān and sent him to Abu Sufiyān and the leaders of Quraysh, to tell them that he had not come to wage war, rather he had come to visit this House (the Ka'bah) and venerate its sanctity.⁶⁸ After an agreement had been reached, but before the treaty documents were signed, there was strong opposition among the Muslims to this agreement, especially with regard to the two conditions to which the Prophet (ﷺ) had committed, namely the condition which obliged him to send back any Muslim who came to join the Muslims in Madeenah, whereas Quraysh were not obliged to send back any Muslims who apostatized and came to join them, and the condition which obliged the Muslims to go back from al-Ḥudaybiyah to Madeenah without entering Makkah that year. Those who objected most strongly to this agreement were 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Usayd ibn Ḥudayr, the chief of al-Aws, and Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah, the chief of al-Khazraj. Historians state that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to voice his objection to this agreement and said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): «"Are you not the Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Yes." He asked: "Are we not Muslims?" He said, "Yes." He then asked: "Are they not *mushrikeen*?" He said: "Yes." He ('Umar) asked: "Then why should we accept this humiliating deal?" He (ﷺ) said: "I am the Messenger of Allah and I will not disobey Him."⁶⁹ According to another report: "I am the slave of Allah and His Messenger; I will never go against His command and He will never forsake me."⁷⁰ ['Umar] asked: "Did you not tell us that we would go to the House and

⁶⁸ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 2/228; *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 34.

⁶⁹ From Ma'een, *as-Seerah* by ash-Shāmi, p. 333.

⁷⁰ Bukhari, hadith no. 3011; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 2/634.

circumambulate it?" He said: "Yes, but did I tell you that you would go there this year?" I said, "No." He (ﷺ) said: "You will go to it and circumambulate it." 'Umar said: "I went to Abu Bakr and said to him, 'O' Abu Bakr, is he not the Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Yes.' I asked, 'Are we not Muslims?' He said, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Are they not *mushrikeen*?' He said, 'Yes.' I said, 'Then why should we accept this humiliating deal?' Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said, advising 'Umar to stop arguing and objecting, 'Listen to him, for I bear witness that he is the Messenger of Allah, and that the truth is what he enjoins. He will never go against the command of Allah and Allah will never forsake him.'"⁷¹

After the sad incident of Abu Jandal, the *Ṣaḥābah* renewed their objections to the treaty, and a group of them, including 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to discuss it with him and voice their objections anew. But by means of the patience, wisdom, forbearance and persuasiveness that Allah had given him, the Prophet (ﷺ) was able to convince them of the soundness of the treaty, that it was in the interests of the Muslims and was a victory for them⁷², and that Allah would grant the weak and oppressed such as Abu Jandal a way out. What the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke of came to pass. 'Umar learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) how to respect honest opposition; hence we see that during his caliphate he encouraged the *Ṣaḥābah* to voice sound opinions that served the public interest.⁷³ Freedom of opinion is guaranteed in the Islamic society, and the individual in a Muslim society has the right to express his opinion freely, even if this opinion differs from that of some ruler or caliph. One of the rights of the Muslim individual is to express his point of view in an atmosphere of safety and security,

⁷¹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 3/634.

⁷² *Ṣulḥ al-Ḥudaybiyah* by Bāshameel, p. 270.

⁷³ *Al-Qiyādah al-'Askariyah fee 'Ahd Rasool-Allāh*, p. 495.

with no fear that some dictatorship will strangle the freedom of thought and speech. From 'Umar's objection to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) we understand that objection to the head of the state in some matter is not a crime that deserves to be punished or for which a person deserves to disappear into the prison system.⁷⁴

This attitude of 'Umar's was not based on any kind of doubt or suspicion with regard to the way things were going; rather he was seeking an explanation for something he did not understand. He was eager to see the *kuffār* humiliated, as he was known for supporting Islam.⁷⁵ After he came to understand the wisdom behind (the treaty), he said of his attitude concerning al-Ḥudaybiyah: "I kept on giving charity, fasting, praying and freeing slaves, because of what I had done that day, for fear of the words that I had spoken, so I hope that it was the cause of something good."⁷⁶

In Sha'bân of 7 A.H., the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to Turbah⁷⁷ at the head of thirty men, to some people of Hawâzin who were lagging behind. Turbah is near al-Qubala', four stages from Makkah. He set out, accompanied by a guide from Banu Hilâl⁷⁸, travelling by night and hiding by day. News of that reached Hawâzin and they fled. 'Umar came to the place where they had been but he did not encounter any one of them, so he left and headed back towards Madeenah.⁷⁹ According to one report, the Hilâli guide said to him: "Do you want to attack another group from

⁷⁴ *Ghazwat al-Ḥudaybiyah* by Abu Fâris, Pp. 134, 135.

⁷⁵ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 191.

⁷⁶ *Mukhtasar Minhâj al-Qâsideen*, p. 283; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa'*, p. 139.

⁷⁷ Turbah is a valley that lies to the east of the Ḥijâz and extends towards Najd.

⁷⁸ Hilâl ibn 'Âmir ibn as-Ṣa'sa'ah ibn Mu'âwiyah ibn Bakr ibn Hawâzin.

⁷⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/272.

Khash'am, who are on the move because there is drought in their land?" 'Umar said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not give me any instructions concerning them, rather he told me to go and fight Hawâzin in Turbah."⁸⁰ This campaign teaches three things concerning military matters:

1. That 'Umar had become qualified to command troops. If that were not the case, the Prophet (ﷺ) would not have appointed him to lead one of the Muslim campaigns that went into an extremely dangerous area, against one of the strongest and most powerful of the Arab tribes.
2. That 'Umar, who travelled by night and hid by day, was following the principle of catching the enemy unawares, which is one of the most important principles of war. This enabled him to catch the enemy off guard and cause them to flee, and in this manner his small troop was able to achieve victory over the more numerous forces of the *mushrikeen*.
3. 'Umar implemented both the letter and the spirit of the commands of his superior, never deviating from them. This is the essence of military discipline in all eras and all places.⁸¹

During the battle of Khaybar, when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) drew lose to Khaybar, he gave the flag to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Some of the people went with 'Umar to attack the people of Khaybar, then 'Umar and his companions retreated and went back to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Tomorrow I will give the flag to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger love him." The next day, both Abu Bakr and 'Umar hoped for it, but he called 'Ali, who was suffering from an eye disease, spat dryly in his eyes, and gave him the

⁸⁰ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 2/228; *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 34.

⁸¹ *Al-Fârooq al-Qâ'id*, Pp. 117, 118 by Sheet Khaṭṭāb.

flag. Some of the people got up with him and they fought the people of Khaybar, among whom was Marhab who was reciting lines of inflammatory verse. He and 'Ali engaged in solitary combat, and 'Ali struck him such a blow on the head that his sword broke on his helmet and the people in the camp heard that blow. Soon the rest of the people joined 'Ali and fought until Allah granted them victory.

When they came back from Khaybar, some of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «“So and so is a martyr.” But the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “No he is not. I saw him in Hell wearing a cloak that he stole from the war booty.” Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “O’ son of al-Khaṭṭāb, go and announce to the people that no one will enter Paradise except the believers.” So I went out and announced that no one would enter Paradise except the believers.»⁸²

2.1.4. The Conquest of Makkah and the battles of Ḥunayn and Tabook

When Quraysh broke the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah, they were afraid of the danger they faced from Madeenah, so they sent Abu Sufiyān to renew the treaty and increase its duration. He came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and met his daughter Umm Ḥabeebah (رضي الله عنها) at her house, but to no avail. He went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and spoke to him, but he did not answer him. Then he went to Abu Bakr and asked him to speak to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) on his behalf, but he said, “I will not do it.” Then he went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and spoke to him. He said: “Should I intercede for you with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)? By Allah, if I had nothing but a small ant, I would fight you with it.”⁸³

⁸² Its isnad is *ḥasan* and its narrators are those quoted by Bukhari and Muslim. *Al-Mawsoo'ah adh-Dhahabiyah Musnad Aḥmad*, no. 203.

⁸³ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 2/265; *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 37.

When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had completed his preparations for the march on Makkah, «Ḥaṭīb ibn Abi Balta'ah wrote a letter to the people of Makkah, telling them that the Prophet (ﷺ) was moving in their direction, but Allah caused His Prophet to know of that letter by means of the Revelation, so he was able to nip this problem in the bud. The Prophet (ﷺ) sent 'Ali and al-Miqdād who caught the woman who was carrying the letter in Rawḍat Khâkh, twelve miles from Madeenah. They threatened to examine her if she did not give them the letter, so she handed it over. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) summoned Ḥaṭīb to investigate the matter. He said: "O' Messenger of Allah, do not be hasty with me. I was a man who was an ally of Quraysh, but I was not one of them. The *Muhājireen* who are with you have relatives who will protect their families and wealth, but I do not have such blood ties, so I wanted to do them a favour so that they would protect my relatives there. I did not do it because I wanted to apostatize from my religion or because I approved of *kufṛ* after having become Muslim." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "He had told you the truth." 'Umar said, "O' Messenger of Allah, let me strike the neck of this hypocrite!" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "He was present at Badr, and you do not know, perhaps Allah looked upon those who were present at Badr and said, 'Do what you wish, for I have forgiven you.' »"⁸⁴ From the discussion that took place between the Messenger (ﷺ) and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb about the case of Ḥaṭīb we may learn several lessons, including the following:

- ❖ That the punishment for spying is execution. 'Umar mentioned that and the Messenger (ﷺ) did not deny it, but he did not allow him to carry out the punishment because he (Ḥaṭīb) had been present at Badr.
- ❖ That 'Umar took the matter of religion very seriously, as was

⁸⁴ Bukhari, *al-Maghâzi*, hadith no. 4274.

demonstrated when he asked permission to strike the neck of Ḥaṭīb (i.e., execute him).

- ❖ That a major sin does not nullify faith. What Ḥaṭīb did was a major sin, namely spying, but nevertheless he was still a believer.
- ❖ 'Umar described Ḥaṭīb as a hypocrite in the linguistic sense of the word, not in the technical *shar'ī* sense of one who inwardly conceals *kufṛ* whilst making an outward display of being Muslim. What 'Umar meant was that Ḥaṭīb felt one thing inwardly and did something else outwardly, when he sent his letter that conflicted with the faith for which he was going out to fight and shed his blood.⁸⁵
- ❖ 'Umar calmed down after he heard what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said. Within seconds, he turned from an angry man who was calling for Ḥaṭīb to be punished for this major sin, to a man who wept with fear (of Allah) and said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." That is because his anger was for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, so when he understood that what was pleasing to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) was something other than what he thought, he overlooked Ḥaṭīb's mistake and treated him with kindness, out of respect for his record of jihad.⁸⁶

When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stopped in Marr adh-Dhahrān and Abu Sufiyyān feared for his life, al-'Abbās, the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to give him protection and he agreed. Al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib said that he said: "Woe to you, O' Abu Sufiyyān! Here is the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) among the people, what a terrible day for Quraysh!" He said, "What can I do, may my father and mother be

⁸⁵ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Fāris, p. 404.

⁸⁶ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 7/176, 177.

sacrificed for you?" I said: "If he catches you he will strike your neck; ride behind me on this mule until I bring you to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and ask him to guarantee your safety." So he rode behind me and his two companions went back. I brought him, and every time we passed a fire of the Muslims, they said, "Who is this?" and when they saw the mule of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and me riding it, they said, "It is the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) on his mule." Then when I passed the fire of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb he said, "Who is this?" and got up to meet me. When he saw Abu Sufiyān on the back of the animal he said, "Abu Sufiyān, the enemy of Allah! Praise be to Allah who has enabled us to catch you without any deal or treaty." Then he went out, hurrying towards the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). 'Umar met him and said: "O' Messenger of Allah, here is Abu Sufiyān! Allah has enabled us to catch him without any deal or treaty. Let me strike his neck!" I said: "O Messenger of Allah, I have offered him my protection." When 'Umar persisted I said, "Wait a minute, O' 'Umar! By Allah, if he was of Banu 'Adiyy you would not say that, but you know that he is a man of Banu 'Abd Manāf." 'Umar said, "Wait a minute, O' 'Abbās! By Allah when you became Muslim that was dearer to me than if al-Khaṭṭāb had become Muslim, and the only reason for that was that I knew that if you became Muslim, that would be dearer to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than if al-Khaṭṭāb were to become Muslim." The Prophet (ﷺ) said: «"O' 'Abbās, take him to your camp, and in the morning bring him to me."»⁸⁷

Such was the attitude of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) when he saw the enemy of Allah passing through the Muslim ranks, protected by al-'Abbās, the paternal uncle of the Prophet (ﷺ), appearing humiliated and scared. 'Umar wanted to execute the enemy of Allah as an act that

⁸⁷ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, Pp. 518-520.

would bring him closer to Allah and an act of jihad for His sake, but Allah had decreed good for Abu Sufiyān and opened his heart to Islam, so his blood and his life were spared.⁸⁸

During the battle of Ḥunayn, the *mushrikoon* caught the Muslim army unawares and the people fled, no one caring about anyone else. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) shifted his position towards the right, then he said: «“Where are you going, O’ people? Come to me! I am the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), I am Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullāh!” But no one listened to him. The camels were bumping into one another and the people left, except for a few of the *Muhājīroon* and Anṣār and his family members, who stayed with him. Among those of the *Muhājīroon* who stood firm with him were Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, and among his family members were ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib and his son al-Faḍl, Abu Sufiyān ibn al-Ḥārith and his son, Rabee‘ah ibn al-Ḥārith, and others.⁸⁹ Abu Qatādah spoke of the stance of ‘Umar during this campaign and said: “We went out with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to Ḥunayn, and when we met the enemy, the Muslims had the upper hand at first. I saw a man of the *mushrikeen* on top of a Muslim man, so I struck him from behind on his shoulder with a sword and cut his chain mail (and cut off his arm). He turned around and squeezed me until I nearly died, then he let me go. I caught up with ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said, ‘What is the matter with the people?’ He said, ‘It is the will of Allah.’ Then they turned back.”»⁹⁰

Allah (ﷻ) said of this battle:

«Truly, Allah has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the day of Ḥunayn [battle] when you rejoiced at your great number, but it

⁸⁸ *Al-Fārooq ma’a an-Nabi*, Dr. ‘Āteef Lamāḍah, p. 42.

⁸⁹ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishām, 2/289; *Akhbār ‘Umar*, p. 41.

⁹⁰ Bukhari, hadith nos. 4066, 4067.

availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight.﴾ (Qur'an 9: 25)

When Allah accepted the repentance of the believers, after they had almost been defeated, Allah granted victory to His close friends, after they came back to their Prophet and gathered around him. Then Allah sent down His reassurance and support to His troops. Allah (ﷻ) says, telling us of that:

«Then Allah did send down His *Sakeenah* [calmness, tranquillity and reassurance] on the Messenger [Muhammad], and on the believers, and sent down forces [angels] which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers.﴾ (Qur'an 9: 26)

«After the battle of Hunayn, the Muslims returned to Madeenah. Whilst they were passing through al-Ji'rānah⁹¹, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was grabbing handfuls of silver from the cloak of Bilāl (رضي الله عنه) and giving it to the people. A man came and said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): "O' Muhammad, be fair!" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Woe to you! Who will be fair if I am not fair to you? You would be doomed and lost if I was not fair." 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, "O' Messenger of Allah, let me strike the neck of this hypocrite!" He said: "Allah forbid that the people should say that I am killing my Companions. This man and his companions read the Qur'an but it does not go any further than their throats."⁹² They pass out of Islam like an arrow passing through game."⁹³ This illustrates an important characteristic of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه): he could not bear to see

⁹¹ Al-Ji'rānah is located ninety-nine kilometers NE of Makkah.

⁹² This is explained in two ways: one is that their hearts do not understand it and what they recite of it does not benefit them, and they gain nothing from it except verbal recitation. The second interpretation is that no deed or recitation will be accepted from them.

⁹³ Muslim, hadith no. 1063; Bukhari, hadith no. 3138.

ḥarām actions being committed in front of him. For this man had transgressed against the sanctity of Prophethood. How quick 'Umar was to say, O' Messenger of Allah, let me kill this hypocrite! This was his reaction to one who transgressed against the sanctity of Prophethood.⁹⁴

In al-Ji'rānah 'Umar responded to the request of the well-known *Ṣaḥābi* Ya'la ibn Umayyah at-Tameemi to see the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when he was receiving Revelation. It was narrated from Safwān ibn Ya'la that Ya'la used to say, "I wish that I could see the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when (Revelation) is coming upon him."⁹⁵ He said: «Whilst the Prophet (ﷺ) was in al-Ji'rānah, shaded by a cloak, with some of his Companions sitting with him, a Bedouin came, wearing a jubbah and drenched in perfume, and said: "O' Messenger of Allah, what do you think about a man who has entered *ihrām* for 'Umrah wearing a jubbah and drenched with perfume?" 'Umar gestured to Ya'la, telling him to come, so Ya'la came, and saw the Prophet (ﷺ) red in the face and breathing heavily. That continued for a while, then it ceased and he said, "As for the perfume, wash it off three times, and as for the jubbah, take it off, then do in 'Umrah what you do in Ḥajj."»⁹⁶

During the campaign of Tabook, 'Umar gave half his wealth in charity, and he suggested to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to pray for blessing for the people when they suffered from hunger. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: «"During the campaign of Tabook"⁹⁷, the people were suffering from hunger. They said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, give us permission to slaughter our camels and

⁹⁴ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayāt al-Fârooq*, p. 200.

⁹⁵ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 2/ 408.

⁹⁶ Bukhari, hadith no. 4700; Muslim, hadith no. 1180.

⁹⁷ Tabook is a place between Wâdi al-Qura and Syria.

eat them and store the fat.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Do that.' Then 'Umar came and said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, if they do that there will be too few riding-beasts. Rather tell them to bring any extra provision they have.' So one man brought a handful of grain, another brought a handful of dates, another brought a piece of bread, until a little food had been collected on a leather mat. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for *barakah* (blessing), and said, 'Fill your vessels.' So they filled their vessels until there was no vessel left in the camp that had not been filled, and they ate their fill and there was plenty left over. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah. The man who meets his Lord without harbouring any doubt about these two (words of truth), would never be kept away from Paradise.' »⁹⁸

These are some of the attitudes of 'Umar in the battles in which he was present alongside the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Undoubtedly 'Umar learned a great deal from his participation in these battle with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which enabled him to lead and guide others.

2.2. 'Umar in the society of Madeenah

'Umar was very keen to remain close to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If he sat in a gathering with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), he would not leave until it ended. He was one of the small group who did not leave the Prophet (ﷺ) as he was delivering a speech when a caravan arrived in Madeenah.⁹⁹ He would sit in the circles and

⁹⁸ Muslim, *Kitāb al-Eemān*, hadith no. 27, English translation: vol. 1, p. 21, hadith no. 42.

⁹⁹ *Al-Iḥsān fee Taqrīb Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, 15/300; Muslim, hadith no. 863.

lessons of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), enthusiastically seeking explanations, asking the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) questions about both personal and general matters.¹⁰⁰ Hence he narrated five hundred and thirty-nine *ahâdeeth* from the Prophet (ﷺ).¹⁰¹ According to another report, he narrated five hundred and thirty seven.¹⁰² Bukhari and Muslim are agreed in their *Ṣaḥeeḥs* on twenty-six of them; Bukhari narrated a further thirty-four, and Muslim narrated a further twenty-one.¹⁰³ The remainder appear in other books of hadith.¹⁰⁴ Allah enabled him to narrate *ahâdeeth* of great importance concerning the topics of Islam, *Eemân* (faith), *iḥsân*, the Divine will and decree, knowledge, *dhikr*, *du'â'*, purification, prayer, funerals, zakah, charity, fasting, Ḥajj, marriage, divorce, lineages, shares of inheritance, wills, social issues, interactions with others, *ḥudood* punishments, clothing, food and drink, slaughtering of meat, morals and manners, asceticism (*zuhd*), heart-softening narrations (*ar-raqâ'iq*), biographies, tribulations (*al-fitan*), the Resurrection, and the appointment of caliphs, governors and judges. These *ahâdeeth* were narrated in the different branches of knowledge and are still benefiting people today.¹⁰⁵ There follow some examples of 'Umar's learning from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Madeenah.

2.2.1. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) asking 'Umar about the one who came and asked questions

It was narrated from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb told me that whilst they were sitting with the

¹⁰⁰ See *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Dr. 'Ali al-Khaṭṭab, p. 108.

¹⁰¹ *Tāreekh al-Khulafā'* by as-Suyooti, p. 133.

¹⁰² See: *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Dr. 'Ali al-Khaṭṭab, p. 109.

¹⁰³ *Daleel al-Fâliḥeen li Turuq Riyâḍ as-Ṣâliḥeen*, 1/40.

¹⁰⁴ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Dr. 'Ali al-Khaṭṭab, p. 109.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 112.

Prophet (ﷺ), there came to him a man with a handsome face and handsome hair, wearing a white garment. The people looked at one another (and said), "We do not know this man, but he does not look like a traveller." Then the man said, "O' Messenger of Allah, shall I come to you?" He (ﷺ) said: "Yes." He came to him and sat with his knees touching his, and his hands on his thighs, and asked, "What is Islam?" He (the Prophet) said, "To bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, to establish prayer, to give zakah, to fast Ramaḍān and to go on Pilgrimage to the House." He then asked, "What is *Eemān* (faith)?" He answered: "To believe in Allah, His angels, Paradise and Hell, the resurrection and the divine will and decree, all of it (i.e., both good and bad)." He (the man) asked, "What is *iḥsān*?" He said, "To strive for Allah as if you can see Him, but even though you cannot see Him, He sees you." He asked, "When will the Hour come?" He (the Prophet) answered, "The one who is being asked about it does not know more than the one who is asking." He asked, "What are its portents?" He said, "When the naked, barefoot, destitute shepherds compete in constructing tall buildings, and when the slave women give birth to their masters."¹⁰⁶ Then he said: "Call the man back." They looked for him but they could not find him. Two or three days passed, then he said: "O son of al-Khaṭṭāb, do you know who was the one who asked about such and such?" He said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said: "That was Jibreel who came to teach you your religion."»¹⁰⁷

This hadith indicates that 'Umar learned the meanings of Islam, faith and *iḥsān* via a question-and-answer method from the best of the angels and the best of the Messengers.

¹⁰⁶ According to the Shaykh Aḥmad Shâkir edition: their mistresses.

¹⁰⁷ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim. *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 184.

2.2.2. ‘Umar’s opinion coinciding with
that of the Messenger of Allah
(Blessings and peace be upon him)

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said:

«We were sitting around the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and Abu Bakr and ‘Umar were with us. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up and left us, and was away from us for a long time. We got worried and got up. I was the first one to go and look for him, and I went out looking for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), until I came to a garden that belonged to the Anṣār of Banu an-Najjār. I went around it looking for a gate but I did not find one, but I saw a spring running through the garden, so I squeezed through the hole through which the spring flowed. I met the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said, “Abu Hurayrah?” I said, “Yes, O’ Messenger of Allah.” He asked, “What is the matter with you?” I said, “You were amongst us, then you went away for a long time, and we got worried about you. I was the first one to come and look for you, so I came to this garden and squeezed through (the hole) like a fox, and (the rest of) the people are behind me.” He said, “O’ Abu Hurayrah,” giving me his sandals, “take these sandals of mine and whoever you meet outside the garden who bears witness that there is no god but Allah, believing it with certainty in his heart, give him the glad tidings of Paradise.” The first one whom I met was ‘Umar, and he asked, “What are these sandals, O’ Abu Hurayrah?” I said, “These are the sandals of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He has sent them with me and whomever I meet who bears witness that there is no god but Allah, believing it with certainty in his heart, I am to give him the glad tidings of Paradise.” ‘Umar struck me on the chest with his hand and I fell on my backside. He said, “Go back, O’ Abu Hurayrah.” So I went back to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and I started to weep, and ‘Umar followed me. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) again asked, “What is the matter with you, O’ Abu

Hurayrah?" I said, "I met 'Umar and I told him what you had sent me to do."¹⁰⁸ Then he hit me on the chest and I fell on my backside and he said, 'Go back'." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) asked, "O' 'Umar, what made you do that?" He said, "O' Messenger of Allah, did you send Abu Hurayrah with your sandals to give glad tidings of Paradise to whomever he met who bore witness that there is no god but Allah, believing it with certainty in his heart?" He (the Prophet) said, "Yes." He said, "Do not do that, for I fear that the people will rely on that. Let them strive hard instead." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "(Yes), let them do that."»¹⁰⁹

2.2.3. The Prophet's keenness for the *Ṣaḥābah* to acquire knowledge from one source

It was narrated from Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh that: «The Prophet (ﷺ) saw a page of the Torah in 'Umar's hand and said, "Are you crazy, O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb? What I have brought to you is pure and white. If Moosa were alive he would not but follow me." According to another report: "If Moosa were alive and you followed him and forsook me, you would go astray."»¹¹⁰

2.2.4. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) speaks of the beginning of creation

It was narrated that Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb said: «I heard 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) say, "The Prophet (ﷺ) stood up amongst us and told us about the beginning of creation, and until the people of Paradise took their places and the people of Hell took their places. Those who

¹⁰⁸ *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb fee Faḍā'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, 1/258.

¹⁰⁹ Muslim, *Kitāb al-Eemān*, ḥadīth no. 31.

¹¹⁰ *Al-Fatāwa*, 11/232; *Musnad Aḥmad*, 3/387, from Jābir.

memorized it memorized it, and those who forgot it forgot it.”¹¹¹ This hadith speaks of the meeting with Allah, which is a concept that ‘Umar learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

2.2.5. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade swearing by one’s forefathers and urged putting one’s trust in Allah

It was narrated from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that: «‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, “Allah forbids you to swear by your forefathers.” ‘Umar said, “By Allah, I never swore by them since I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbidding that, and I never spoke of them whether I was speaking on my own behalf or narrating what someone else had said.”¹¹² And ‘Umar heard the Prophet of Allah say: «“If your were to put your trust in Allah as you should, you would be given provision like the birds, who go out in the morning hungry and come back in the evening with full stomachs.”»¹¹³

2.2.6. “I am pleased with Allah as my Lord, Islam as my religion and with Muhammad as my Prophet and Messenger”

It was narrated that Abu Moosa said: «The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about things that he disliked, and when it became too much he got angry. Then he said to the people: “Ask me whatever you want.” A man asked, “Who is my father?” He said, “Your father is

¹¹¹ Bukhari, *Kitāb Bad’ al-Khalq*, hadith no. 192.

¹¹² Its isnad is *ṣaheeh* according to the conditions of Bukhari. *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no. 122; *al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Hadeethiyah*.

¹¹³ Its isnad is *qawiy*. *Musnad Ahmad* hadith no. 205, *al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Hadeethiyah*.

Hudhâfah.” Another man asked, “Who is my father?” He said, “Your father is Sâlim the freed slave of Shaybah.”¹¹⁴ When 'Umar saw the expression on the Prophet's face, he said, “O' Messenger of Allah, we repent to Allah.”¹¹⁵ According to another report, «'Umar went down on his knees and said, “We are pleased with Allah as our Lord, Islam as our religion and Muhammad as our Prophet,” then he kept quiet.»¹¹⁶

2.2.7. “No, not at all, rather it is for all the people”

It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (ؓ) that: «A man came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said, “A woman came to me to offer allegiance and I took her into a small room and did something with her that was less than intercourse.” He said, “Woe to you, probably her husband is away (fighting in jihad) for the sake of Allah.” Then words of Qur'an were revealed:

﴿And perform *aş-Şalâh* [*Iqâmat aş-Şalâh*], at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e. the five compulsory *Şalât* (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds [i.e. small sins]. That is a reminder [an advice] for the mindful [those who accept advice].﴾
(Qur'an 11: 114)

He said, “O' Messenger of Allah, is it just for me or for all the people?” He — meaning 'Umar — struck his chest with his hand and said, “No, not at all rather it is for all the people.” And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “'Umar has spoken the truth.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Sa'd ibn Sâlim the free slave of Shaybah ibn Rabee'ah was a *Şahâbi*. *Maḥḍ aş-Şawâb*, 2/700.

¹¹⁵ Bukhari, hadith no. 92; Muslim, hadith no 2360.

¹¹⁶ Bukhari, hadith no. 93; Muslim, hadith no. 2359.

¹¹⁷ *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/41, hadith no. 2206. Aḥmad Shâkir said: its isnad is *saḥeeh*.

2.2.8. Ruling on one who takes back his charity

It was narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: «“I provided a mount for the sake of Allah, but its owner neglected it. I wanted to buy it back and I thought that he would sell it cheaply. But I said, (I will not do anything) until I ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He (the Prophet) said, “Do not buy it, even if he gives it to you for a *dirham*, for the one who takes back his charity is like the dog that goes back to its vomit.”»¹¹⁸

2.2.9. His charity and *waqfs*

It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that: «‘Umar gave some property of his in charity at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was called *Thamgh* and there were date palm trees there. ‘Umar said: “O’ Messenger of Allah, I have acquired some property which is very dear to me, and I want to give it in charity.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Give it in charity (as an endowment) on the condition that it will not be sold, given away or inherited, and its yields will be spend (on charitable purposes).” So ‘Umar gave it in charity, and that gift of his was given for the sake of Allah, for (emancipation of) slaves, the poor, guests, wayfarers and kinsmen. There would be no sin on its administrator if he ate from it on a reasonable basis or fed his friends, without intending to become wealthy by its means.»¹¹⁹

According to another report: «‘Umar acquired some land in Khaybar. He came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: “I have acquired some land in Khaybar and I have never acquired any property that is more precious than it. What do you command me to do with it?” He

¹¹⁸ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim. *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 281.

¹¹⁹ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Waṣāyā*, hadith no. 2772, and other reports.

said, "If you wish, you may give it in charity (as an endowment)." So 'Umar gave it in charity on condition that it would not be sold, given away or inherited, for (the benefit of) the poor, kinsmen, slaves, for the sake of Allah, for guests and wayfarers. There would be no sin on its administrator if he ate from it on a reasonable basis or fed his friends, without intending to become wealthy by its means.»¹²⁰

This attitude clearly demonstrates the virtue of 'Umar and his eagerness to do good deeds, and how he preferred the life of the Hereafter to the transient life of this world.

2.2.10. The Prophet's gifts to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and his son

It was narrated that Ibn 'Umar said: «'Umar saw a man wearing a *ḥullah* (suit) of brocade. He brought it to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: "O' Messenger of Allah, why don't you buy this and wear it to meet the delegations of the people when they come to you." He said, "Silk is only worn by those who have no share (in the Hereafter)." Some time passed, then the Prophet (ﷺ) sent a *ḥullah* to him. He brought it to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "You sent this to me when you said what you said about a similar suit (or about the *ḥullah* of 'Aṭārid¹²¹?" He said, "I sent it to you so that you could make money from it."»¹²² According to another report, 'Umar gave it to a brother of his in Makkah who had not yet become Muslim.»¹²³

As for the gift that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave to Ibn 'Umar, it was narrated that: «'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar said, "We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) on a journey, and I was riding a difficult camel that belonged to

¹²⁰ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Waṣāya*, hadith no. 2773, and other reports.

¹²¹ i.e., 'Aṭārid at-Tameemi ad-Dārimi.

¹²² Muslim, hadith no. 2068.

¹²³ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Adāb*, hadith no. 5636.

'Umar. It would go out of my control and go ahead of the rest of the people, then 'Umar would rebuke it and make it go back. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Umar, 'Sell it to me.' He said, 'It is yours, O' Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'Sell it to me.' So 'Umar sold it to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'It is yours, O' 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar; do with it whatever you want.' »¹²⁴

2.2.11. 'Umar's encouragement to his son and glad tidings to Ibn Mas'ood

It was narrated from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Among trees there is one whose leaves do not fall, and it is like the Muslim. Tell me what it is." The people started to suggest different kinds of desert trees. I thought to myself that it was the date-palm tree, but I felt too shy (to speak up). They said, "O' Messenger of Allah, tell us what it is." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "It is the date palm." 'Abdullāh said, "I told my father what I had thought of, and he said, 'If you had said that, it would have been dearer to me than if I had such and such.' » »¹²⁵

As for 'Umar's glad tidings to Ibn Mas'ood, 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) narrated that: «He stayed up late one night in the house of Abu Bakr with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), discussing the affairs of the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out, and we went out with him, and there was a man standing and praying in the mosque. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood and listened to his recitation, and before we recognized whose voice it was, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Whoever would like to recite the Qur'an fresh as it was revealed, let him recite it according to the recitation of Ibn Umm

¹²⁴ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Buyū'*, hadith no. 2009.

¹²⁵ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-'Ilm*, hadith no. 131.

'Abd. Then the man sat and said *du'ā'*, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) started saying to him, "Ask for you will be given, ask for you will be given." 'Umar said, "By Allah, I will go to him tomorrow and tell him this good news. The next day I went to him to tell him this good news, and I found that Abu Bakr had beaten me to it. I never tried to beat him to something good but he beat me to it."»¹²⁶

2.2.12. His caution against innovation

It was narrated from al-Miswar ibn Makhramah¹²⁷ and 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Abdul-Qāri that they heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb say: «I heard Hishām ibn Ḥakeem ibn Ḥizām reciting *Soorah al-Furqān*, during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). I listened to his recitation, and found that he was reciting it in many versions (*ḥuroof*) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had not taught me. I nearly jumped on him whilst he was praying, but I waited until he said the *salām*, then I collared him and said, "Who taught you to recite this *Soorah* that I heard you reciting?" He said, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) taught it to me." I said, "You are lying, for by Allah the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) taught me this *Soorah* that I heard." I took him to the Messenger of Allah and said to him, "O' Messenger of Allah, I heard this one reciting *al-Furqān* in a manner that you did not teach me, and you taught me *Soorah al-Furqān*." He (the Prophet) said, "O' Hisham, recite it." He recited it in the manner that I had heard, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Thus it was revealed." Then he said, "Recite, O' 'Umar." So I recited it in the manner that he had taught me and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Thus it was revealed." Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "The

¹²⁶ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 175; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyah*.

¹²⁷ Az-Zuhri knew him and his father. He died in 64 A.H.

Qur'an was revealed with seven recitations, so recite whichever of them is easiest for you."»¹²⁸

2.2.13. Take whatever comes to you of this wealth without you hoping for it or asking for it

It was narrated that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar said: «I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb say, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would to give me a gift and I would say, 'Give it to someone who is poorer than I am.' Then one day he gave me some money and I said, 'Give it to someone who is poorer than I am.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Take it. Whatever of this wealth comes to you without you hoping for it or asking for it, accept it, and what you do not get, do not seek it.' "»¹²⁹

2.2.14. The *du'ā'* of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for 'Umar (رضي الله عنه)

«The Prophet (ﷺ) saw 'Umar wearing a white garment (or shirt) and said: "Is your garment new or has it been washed?" He said, "No, it has been washed." He said, "May you wear new garments, live a praiseworthy life, and die as a martyr."»¹³⁰

2.2.15. I knew when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) walked among them that they would be blessed

It was narrated from Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh that: «His father died and left behind a debt of thirty *wasqs* that he owed to a Jewish man.

¹²⁸ Bukhari, *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'an*, hadith no 4754; Muslim, hadith no. 818.

¹²⁹ Muslim, *Kitāb az-Zakāh*, hadith no. 1045.

¹³⁰ Classed as *ḥasan* by Shaykh al-Albānī in *as-Silsilah aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, no. 352; see also *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jāmi'*, hadith no. 1234.

Jâbir asked him to let him defer payment of the debt, but he refused. Jâbir spoke to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), asking him to intercede with him for him. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went and spoke to the Jew, asking him to take whatever was on the trees in lieu of what he owed, but he refused. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went among the date palms and walked among them, then he said to Jâbir, "Collect them for him and pay off what is owed to him." He collected them after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went back, and he paid off thirty *wasqs* to him, and had seventeen *wasqs* left over. Jâbir came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to tell him what had happened, and he found him praying *ʿAṣr*. When he had finished he told him of the abundance. He said, "Tell the son of al-Khaṭṭāb about that." Jâbir went to 'Umar and told him, and 'Umar said to him, "I knew when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) walked among them that they would be blessed."»¹³¹

2.2.16. The marriage of Ḥaḥṣah bint 'Umar (رضي الله عنها) to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: «When the husband of Ḥaḥṣah bint 'Umar, Khunays ibn Ḥudhâfah as-Sahami, who was one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), died in Madeenah, I went to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (رضي الله عنه) and offered Ḥaḥṣah bint 'Umar to him in marriage. I said, "If you wish, I will marry Ḥaḥṣah to you." He said, "I will think about it." A few days passed, then he met me and said, "I think that I do not want to get married." Then I met Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (رضي الله عنه) and said, "If you wish, I will marry Ḥaḥṣah bint 'Umar to you." But Abu Bakr remained silent and did not give me any answer, and I felt more upset with him than I had with 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. A few days passed, then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) proposed marriage to her

¹³¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Istiqrâḍ*, hadith no. 2266.

and I married her to him. Abu Bakr met me and said, "Perhaps you felt upset with me when you offered Ḥaḥṣah to me in marriage and I did not answer you?" 'Umar said, "Yes." Abu Bakr said, "Nothing kept me from answering you except the fact that I knew that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had mentioned her, and I did not want to disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had decided not to marry her, I would have married her."»¹³²

2.3. 'Umar's attitude concerning the Prophet's disagreement with his wives

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbās said: «I was always keen to ask 'Umar about the two wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) of whom Allah said:

«If you two [wives of the Prophet: 'Ā'ishah and Ḥaḥṣah] turn in repentance to Allah, [it will be better for you], your hearts are indeed so inclined [to oppose what the Prophet likes]...» (*Qur'an* 66: 4)

— until 'Umar went for Ḥajj and I went with him. When we were part way there, 'Umar turned aside and I went with him, carrying the water. He relieved himself then he came to me and I poured water on his hands and he did *wuḍoo'*. I asked, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, who are the two wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) of whom Allah says, «If you two [wives of the Prophet] turn in repentance to Allah, [it will be better for you], your hearts are indeed so inclined [to oppose what the Prophet likes]»? " 'Umar said, "I wonder about you, O' Ibn 'Abbās" — az-Zuhri said, He disliked the question. He said, "They are Ḥaḥṣah and 'Ā'ishah." Then he carried on speaking and said, "We Quraysh

¹³² Bukhari, *Kitāb an-Nikāh*, hadith no. 5122; 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Muhammad Rasheed, p. 23.

had the upper hand over our women, but when we came to Madeenah we found a people whose women had the upper hand over them, and our women started learning from them. My house was among Banu Umayyah ibn Zayd in al-‘Awâli. One day I got angry with my wife, and to my surprise she started answering me back. I objected to that and she said, “Don’t you like me answering you back? The wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) answer him back and one of them may forsake him all day until night comes.” So I went to Ḥafṣah and asked, “Do you answer back to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?” She said, “Yes.” I said, “Does one of you forsake him all day until night comes?” She said, “Yes.” I said, “The one who does that is lost and doomed. Do you think that Allah will not be angry with her because of the anger of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)? Then she will indeed be doomed. Do not answer back to the Messenger of Allah or ask him for anything. Ask me for whatever you want. And do not be upset because your neighbour—meaning ‘Â’ishah—is more beautiful and more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than you are.” I had a neighbour among the Anṣâr, and we used to take it in turns to go down to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He would go down one day and bring me news of the Revelation and other things, and I would go down the next day and do likewise. We had been saying that Ghassân were shoeing their horses in order to attack us, and my neighbour went down one day, then he came to me in the evening and knocked on my door, then he called me and I went out to him. He said, “Something serious has happened!” I said, “What is it? Have Ghassân come?” He said, “No, it is worse than that: the Messenger has divorced his wives.” I said, “Ḥafṣah is lost and doomed. I thought that this was going to happen.” When I had prayed *Fajr* I got dressed and went to Ḥafṣah; I went inside her house and she was weeping. I asked, “Has the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) divorced you?” She said, “I do not know. He has secluded himself in this small room.” I went to a black slave of his and said, “Ask for permission for ‘Umar to enter.” The

slave went in, then he came out to me and said, "I mentioned you to him and he said nothing." Then I went to the *minbar*, and a group of people had gathered there, some of whom were weeping. I sat down for a while, but I felt too upset. I went back to the slave and said, "Ask for permission for 'Umar to enter." The slave went in, then he came out to me and said, "I mentioned you to him and he said nothing." I turned to leave, then the slave called me and said, "Go in, for he has given permission to you." So I went in and greeted the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with *salām*, and he was reclining on a reed mat that had left marks on his side. I asked, "O' Messenger of Allah, have you divorced your wives?" He raised his head and looked at me, and said, "No." I said, "*Allāhu Akbar*. Do you remember, O' Messenger of Allah, we Quraysh used to have the upper hand over our women, but when we came to Madeenah, we found a people whose women had the upper hand over them, and our women started to learn from theirs. I got angry with my wife one day and to my surprise she started answering me back. I objected to that and she said, 'Don't you like me answering you back? The wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) answer him back and one of them may forsake him all day until night comes.' I said, 'The one among them who does that is lost and doomed. Does any one of them think that Allah will not be angry with her because of the anger of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)? Then she will indeed be doomed.'" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) smiled and I said, "O' Messenger of Allah, I went to Ḥafṣah and said, 'Do not be upset because your neighbour is more beautiful and more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than you are.'" He smiled again and I said, "May I sit down, O' Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Yes." So I sat down, and I started looking around the room, and by Allah there was nothing to see except three untanned skins. I said, "O' Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah to bestow more bounty upon your ummah, for the Persians and the Byzantines have been given great bounty and they do not worship Allah." He sat up straight then

he said, "Are you doubting, O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb? They are people to whom good things are given in this world." I said, "Pray for forgiveness for me, O' Messenger of Allah." And he swore that he would not meet them for a month, because he was so upset with them, until Allah rebuked him.»¹³³

These are the reports that I was able to collect about the life of 'Umar in the society of Madeenah. 'Umar was praised highly by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) which is indicative of his virtue, religious commitment and knowledge. We will discuss that more below.

2.4. Some of his virtues

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was second to Abu Bakr in virtue, and he was the best of all people after the Prophets, Messengers and Abu Bakr. This is what the Muslim must believe about the virtue of 'Umar, and this is the belief of the saved group, *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah*.¹³⁴ There are many well known *aḥâdeeth* and reports which speak of the virtues of 'Umar, including the following:

2.4.1. His faith, knowledge and religious commitment

Concerning the status of his faith, 'Abdullâh ibn Hishâm said: «We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) and he was holding the hand of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. 'Umar said to him, "O' Messenger of Allah, you are more beloved to me than anything except my own self." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, not until I am more beloved to you than your own self." 'Umar said to

¹³³ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim. *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no. 222, *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyah*.

¹³⁴ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah fee as-Ṣaḥâba al-Kirâm* by Dr. Nâsir ibn 'Alî 'Â'id Ḥasan ash-Shaykh, 1/243.

him, "No, by Allah, you are more beloved to me than my own self." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Now (you have got it right), O 'Umar."»¹³⁵

With regard to his knowledge, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «"Whilst I was sleeping (i.e., in a dream), I drank some milk until I could see its wetness emerging from my fingertips, then I passed it to 'Umar." They asked, "How did you interpret that, O' Messenger of Allah?" He said, "(It refers to) knowledge."»¹³⁶ This is a metaphor, for milk and knowledge share the characteristics of being very beneficial and bringing soundness, for milk brings physical nourishment and knowledge brings spiritual nourishment. This hadith highlights the virtues of 'Umar, for dreams are not usually to be interpreted literally, even though the dreams of the Prophets are part of the Revelation. But some of them need to be interpreted in a way other than their apparent meaning, whilst others may be interpreted literally. What is meant by knowledge in this hadith is understanding of how to rule people according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This applies especially to 'Umar because of the length of his reign in comparison to Abu Bakr; the people were also united in obeying him, in contrast to 'Uthmān. The duration of Abu Bakr's caliphate was very short and not many conquests took place during that time, which were the main causes of division and differences. 'Umar's reign was very long and there were many conquests, but 'Umar ruled in a way that prevented division and differences, and nobody opposed him even though he ruled for a long time. The conquests went even further during the caliphate of 'Uthmān, but different ideas and views began to spread, and 'Uthmān did not enjoy the obedience that 'Umar had enjoyed, which led to tribulations that ultimately ended in his murder. He was succeeded by 'Ali, and the division and tribulation only got worse.

¹³⁵ *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Musnad fee Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, 66.

¹³⁶ *Faṭḥ al-Bāri*, 7/46.

With regard to 'Umar's religious commitment, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Whilst I was sleeping, the people were shown to me and they were wearing garments, For some of them the garment came down only as far as the chest, and some were shorter than that. And 'Umar was shown to me; he was wearing a garment that he was dragging (along the ground).” They asked, “How did you interpret that, O' Messenger of Allah?” He said, “(It refers to) religious commitment.”»¹³⁷

2.4.2. People were afraid of him and so was the *Shayṭān*

It was narrated that Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (رضي الله عنه) said: «'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sought permission to see the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). There were some women of Quraysh with him who were talking to him and asking too many questions, raising their voices above his. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb asked for permission to enter, they ran and hid. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave him permission to enter, so 'Umar came in and found the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) smiling. He said, “May Allah make you smile always, O' Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “I am surprised about these women who were with me. When they heard your voice, they ran and hid.” 'Umar said, “You have more right to be feared by them, O' Messenger of Allah.” Then 'Umar said, “O' enemies of yourselves! Do you fear me and not the Messenger of Allah?” They said, “Yes, you are more harsh and more stern than the Messenger of Allah.” The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, the *Shayṭān* never meets you on a path but he takes another path.”»¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Muslim, hadith no. 2390.

¹³⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 3682; Muslim, hadith no. 2386.

This hadith points to the virtue of 'Umar and demonstrates how, because of his constant adherence to the truth, the *Shayṭān* could not find a way to have any influence on him.¹³⁹

Ibn Ḥajar said: "This virtue means that the *Shayṭān* had no influence over 'Umar, but that does not mean that he was infallible. Rather the hadith only says that the *Shayṭān* would not walk on the same path as 'Umar. This does not mean that he did not whisper to him as much as he could. If it is said that we may conclude from this hadith that the *Shayṭān* was not able to whisper to him, because if the *Shayṭān* was prevented from walking on a path where 'Umar was, it is more likely that he would not be able to get so close as to be able to whisper to him, and so 'Umar was protected from the *Shayṭān*, still that does not necessarily mean that he was infallible, because infallibility is certain in the case of a Prophet, and is merely a possibility in the case of anyone else."

In the hadith of Ḥafṣah that is narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* it says: «"The *Shayṭān* has never met 'Umar from the time he became Muslim, but he flees immediately."» This is indicative of his steadfastness in religious commitment, and his serious and firm adherence to the truth.

An-Nawawī said: "This hadith is to be understood according to its apparent meaning, that the *Shayṭān* fled whenever he saw him." 'Iyāḍ said: "It is to be understood by way of analogy, meaning that 'Umar had left the path of *Shayṭān* and followed the right path, so he went against everything that the *Shayṭān* loves." Ibn Ḥajar said: "The first interpretation is more correct."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, 1/348.

¹⁴⁰ *Fath al-Bārī*, 7/47-48; *Sharḥ an-Nawawī*, 15/165-167.

2.4.3. The inspired one of this ummah

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Among the nations who came before you were some who were inspired. If anyone among my ummah were to be inspired it would be ‘Umar.”»¹⁴¹ This hadith speaks of an important characteristic of ‘Umar. The scholars differed as to what was meant by the word *muḥaddath* (translated here as “inspired”). It was said that it meant one who is inspired, or one who speaks the truth spontaneously, or one to whom the angels speak without him being a Prophet, i.e., they speak to him in his heart even though he does not see an angel in reality, which boils down to meaning inspired. And some suggested that it referred to intuition.¹⁴²

Ibn Ḥajar said: “The fact that on many occasions during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ) ‘Umar’s suggestions were corroborated by Qur’an, and after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) he often got things right by intuition, and that he was the only one who was honoured with this quality and that other *Ṣaḥābah* were not, does not mean that he is better than Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه).”¹⁴³

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “Do not think that the fact that this quality was unique to ‘Umar means that he was better than Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq. Rather the fact that Abu Bakr did not have this quality was better than having it, for he had learned so much from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he had no need of any inspiration or intuition. What Abu Bakr had learned directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) was better than that which ‘Umar learned by means of inspiration.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Bukhari, hadith no. 3689; Muslim, hadith no. 2398.

¹⁴² *Fath al-Bâri*, 7/50; *Sharḥ an-Nawawî*, 15/166.

¹⁴³ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ‘ah*, 1/251.

¹⁴⁴ *Miftâḥ Dâr as-Sa‘âdah*, 1/255.

2.4.4. "I had never seen anyone so strong doing this task"

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Whilst I was sleeping, I saw myself drawing water from a well with a bucket. Abu Bakr came and drew a bucket or two weakly. May Allah forgive him.”¹⁴⁵ Then ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came and the bucket turned into a very large one in his hands. I had never seen any one so strong doing this task, all the people drank their fill and watered their camels that knelt down there.”»¹⁴⁶

This hadith speaks of an obvious virtue of ‘Umar, as is reflected in the words of the Prophet (ﷺ): “Then ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came and the bucket turned into a very large one in his hands...” The word translated here as “strong” refers to a leader, or it was said that it refers to something above which there is nothing else. “Watered their camels” means that the people gave their camels water to drink, then they returned to the pens into which they used to go after drinking in order to rest. This dream that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw is an obvious analogy to what happened to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar during their caliphates, how they strove well, directed the course of events and benefited the people. During the caliphate of Abu Bakr there was fighting with the apostates (*ahl ar-riddah*); he put a stop to them and spread Islam despite the short duration of his caliphate, which lasted only two years and a few months. But Allah blessed it greatly and created a great deal of benefit in it. When Abu Bakr died, he was succeeded by ‘Umar, during whose time Islam spread even further...

... and the rules of shari‘ah were implemented and developed to address new situations. The people benefited a great deal during the

¹⁴⁵ “May Allah forgive him”; this is not intended to belittle Abu Bakr; rather it is a phrase which the Muslims used to use frequently in their speech.

¹⁴⁶ Muslim, hadith no. 2393.

caliphate of 'Umar because it was so lengthy. 'Umar established new cities and organized the affairs of state, and there were many conquests and a great deal of booty.

What is meant by the phrase "I had never seen any one so strong doing this task" is: I had never seen any leader striving so hard and achieving so much. With regard to the meaning of the words, "all the people drank their fill", al-Qaḍī 'Ayyāḍ said: "This seems to refer to the caliphate of 'Umar in particular, although it was said that it refers to the caliphates of both Abu Bakr and 'Umar, because of their thinking and management, and their efforts to serve the interests of the Muslims. This was achieved and 'all the people drank their fill' because Abu Bakr defeated the apostates and united the Muslims, and he initiated the conquests and paved the way, and his efforts bore fruit during the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb."¹⁴⁷

2.4.5. The protective jealousy of 'Umar and the glad tidings that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave him of a palace in Paradise

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «"I saw myself (in a dream) entering Paradise, and there I saw ar-Rumayṣa' — the wife of Abu Ṭalayḥah — and I heard the sound of footsteps. I said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'It is Bilāl.' And I saw a palace, in the courtyard of which there was a young woman. I said, 'Whose (palace) is this?' They said, '(It is) 'Umar's.' I wanted to go in and look around, but then I remembered your protective jealousy.' " 'Umar said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O' Messenger of Allah! Would I feel jealous towards you?"»¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ *Sharḥ an-Nawawī*, 15/161-162.

¹⁴⁸ Muslim, ḥadīth no. 2394; *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawḥeeq*, p. 54; Bukhari, ḥadīth nos. 3476, 6620.

According to another report, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Whilst I was sleeping, I saw myself in Paradise, and there was a woman doing *wuḍoo*’ beside a palace. I said, ‘Whose is this palace?’ They said, ‘(It is) ‘Umar’s.’ Then I remembered your protective jealousy so I turned away.” ‘Umar wept and said, “Would I feel protective jealousy towards you, O’ Messenger of Allah?”»¹⁴⁹

These two hadith clearly point to the virtue of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), as the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke of having seen a palace for him in Paradise. This is indicative of his high status before Allah.¹⁵⁰

2.4.6. The most beloved of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to him after Abu Bakr

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) said that he asked: «“O’ Messenger of Allah, which of the people is most beloved to you?” He (the Prophet) said, “ ‘Ā’ishah.” I asked, “O’ Messenger of Allah, who among men?” He said, “Her father.” I then asked, “Then who?” He said, “Then ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.” Then he named some other men.»¹⁵¹

2.4.7. Glad tidings of Paradise for ‘Umar

It was narrated that Abu Moosa al-Ash‘ari said: «I was with the Prophet (ﷺ) in one of the gardens of Madeenah, when a man came and asked for the gate to be opened. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Open the gate for him, and give him the glad tidings of Paradise.” I opened the gate for him, and it was Abu Bakr. I gave him the glad tidings of what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had said, and he praised

¹⁴⁹ Muslim, hadith no. 2395.

¹⁵⁰ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah wa aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/245.

¹⁵¹ *Al-Ihsân fee Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Hibbân*, 15/209. The hadith also appears in Muslim, hadith no. 2384, and in Bukhari, *Bāb Ghazw Dhāt as-Salāsīl*, hadith no. 4100.

Allah. Then another man came and asked for the gate to be opened. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Open the gate for him, and give him the glad tidings of Paradise." I opened the gate for him, and it was 'Umar. I told him what the Prophet (ﷺ) had said and he praised Allah. Then another man asked for the gate to be opened. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Open the gate for him, and give him the glad tidings of Paradise for a calamity that will befall him." And it was 'Uthmān. I told him what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had said and he praised Allah, then he said, "Allah is the One Whose help I seek."»¹⁵²

2.5. 'Umar's attitude during the sickness of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and upon his death

2.5.1. During the sickness of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

'Abdullāh ibn Zam'ah said: «When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fell sick, Bilāl entered upon him to call him to come and pray. He (ﷺ) said: "Tell someone to lead the people in prayer." So I went out and saw 'Umar among the people, and Abu Bakr was not there, so I said, "Get up, O' 'Umar, and lead the people in prayer." So he got up, and when he said the *takbeer*, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) heard his voice, for 'Umar was a man who had a loud voice. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Where is Abu Bakr? For Allah would not accept that and neither would the Muslims, Allah would not accept that and neither would the Muslims." He sent for Abu Bakr, who came after 'Umar had finished that prayer, and he led the people in prayer. 'Abdullāh ibn Zam'ah said that 'Umar said to him, "Woe to you! What have you done to me, O' Ibn Zam'ah? By Allah, when you told

¹⁵² Bukhari, *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 3290.

me (to lead the prayer), I thought that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had enjoined that, otherwise I would not have led the people in prayer." I said, "By Allah, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not enjoin that, but when I did not see Abu Bakr, I thought that you were the most deserving of those present to lead the people in prayer."»¹⁵³

Ibn 'Abbās narrated that: «When the pain grew intense, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Bring me a sheet so that I may write something for you after which you will not go astray." 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, "The Prophet (ﷺ) is in severe pain, and the Book of Allah is sufficient for us." They started arguing and raising their voices. He said, "Go away from me; it is not right that you should argue in front of me." Ibn 'Abbās went out saying, "It was most unfortunate that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was prevented from writing his statement."»¹⁵⁴

The scholars discussed this hadith and explained it in such a way that puts one's mind at ease. An-Nawawī discussed it at length and in detail in his commentary on Muslim, where he said:

"It should be noted that the Prophet (ﷺ) was infallible and could not lie or change any of the rulings of shari'ah, whether he was healthy or sick. He was also protected against failing to explain anything that needed explanation or conveying anything that Allah had commanded him to convey. But he was not infallible against the diseases and sicknesses to which the body is susceptible and other such things that do not undermine his status and could not affect any of the issues of shari'ah that were already established. He (ﷺ) was bewitched and he imagined that he had done things that he had not done, but when he was in that state, he did not suggest anything that contradicted the rulings that he had previously established. Once you understand the point we are making, the scholars differed concerning

¹⁵³ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeḥ*; narrated by Abu Dawood, hadith no. 4660.

¹⁵⁴ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-'Ilm*, hadith no. 114.

the statement that the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to write. It was said that he wanted to state that the caliphate should go to a specific person lest there be disputes and tribulations concerning it; or that he wanted to write something in which he would sum up the most important rulings, so as to dispel the risk of dispute concerning them and so that there would be agreement upon what was stated. The Prophet (ﷺ) thought of writing this statement because it seemed to him that it would serve a purpose, or he had received revelation telling him to do that. Then it appeared that it was better not to do that, or he received revelation to that effect, so the first command was abrogated.

With regard to the words of 'Umar, the scholars who commented on this hadith are unanimously agreed that this is indicative of 'Umar's knowledge of religion, virtues and subtle insight, because he feared that the Prophet (ﷺ) might write things that may be beyond them, for which they would incur punishment, because these matters would be clearly stated and there would be no room for *ijtihād* concerning them. This is why 'Umar said, 'The Book of Allah is sufficient for us,' because Allah (ﷻ) says:

«... We have neglected nothing in the Book...» (*Qur'an* 6: 38)
And:

«... This day, I have perfected your religion for you...» (*Qur'an* 5: 3)

He knew that Allah had perfected His religion and that the ummah was safe from misguidance, so he wanted to spare the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) any further effort. 'Umar had better insight than Ibn 'Abbās and those who shared his view. Al-Khaṭṭābī said: It is not permissible to interpret what 'Umar said as meaning that he thought that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) might make a mistake, or some other inappropriate notion. Rather when he saw that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was in great pain and that death was approaching, he feared that this was akin to the talk of a sick person who does not speak in a definitive manner, and that the hypocrites would take this

as a means to criticize Islam. His companions used to discuss some matters with him before he confirmed them in definitive terms, as happened on the day of al-Ḥudaybiyah concerning the treaty between him and Quraysh. But when the Prophet (ﷺ) issued a command he did so in definitive terms, and none of them would discuss it with him.”¹⁵⁵

'Umar's words, “The Book of Allah is sufficient for us” were a response to those who were arguing with him, not to the command of the Prophet (ﷺ).¹⁵⁶ Shaykh 'Alī aṭ-Ṭanāwī commented on this by saying: “What I think is that during his lengthy companionship with the Prophet (ﷺ), 'Umar had grown accustomed to expressing his opinion because he knew that he had permission to do so; there are many reports which tell how he suggested things to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), requested things from him and asked him about things. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would confirm his view if he was right and correct him if he was wrong. When the Messenger (ﷺ) said, ‘Bring me a sheet so that I may write something for you’, 'Umar — as was his usual habit — offered his suggestion, saying that the Book of Allah was sufficient, and the Prophet (ﷺ) agreed with him. If he had wanted to go ahead and write the statement, he would have told 'Umar to be quiet and he would have done what he wanted.”¹⁵⁷

2.5.2. 'Umar's attitude on the day of the Prophet's death

When news of the Prophet's death reached the people, there was a great deal of distress. The death of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

¹⁵⁵ *Ṣaḥeeḥ as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, p. 750, quoting from *Sharḥ Muslim*, 11/90.

¹⁵⁶ *Sharḥ an-Nawawī*, 11/90; *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fee Mawâqif al-Aṣḥāb* by al-Gharsī, p. 41.

¹⁵⁷ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 36.

came as a great shock to many of the Muslims, especially 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The great *Ṣaḥābi* Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) tells us what happened:

«When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb stood up and said, "Some of the hypocrites are claiming that the Messenger of Allah has died, but the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has not died, rather he has gone to his Lord as Moosa ibn 'Imrān did; he went away from his people for forty days, then he came back to them after it was said that he had died. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah will come back to us as Moosa came back. Let the hands and feet of those who say that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has died be cut off."¹⁵⁸

When he heard the news, Abu Bakr came and dismounted at the door of the mosque whilst 'Umar was still speaking to the people, and he did not pay attention to anything until he went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the house of 'Ā'ishah, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was lying, fully covered with a striped cloak, in a corner of the room. He went and uncovered the face of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and kissed him, then he said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you. As for the death that Allah has decreed for you, you have tasted it, and no death will ever befall you again after this." Then he put the cloak back over the face of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and went out. 'Umar was still speaking to the people and he said, "Calm down and listen, O 'Umar!" But 'Umar insisted on speaking, and when Abu Bakr saw that he would not listen, he turned to the people and when the people heard him speaking, they turned to him and left 'Umar. (Abu Bakr) praised and glorified Allah, then he said:

"O' people, whoever used to worship Muhammad, Muhammad has died, but whoever used to worship Allah, Allah is Living and will never die." Then he recited the following verse:

¹⁵⁸ *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Abi Shaybah, 2/594.

«Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed [many] Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels [as disbelievers]? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful.» (Qur'an 3: 144)

Abu Hurayrah said, "By Allah, it was as if the people did not know that this verse had been revealed until Abu Bakr recited it to them that day. The people learned it from Abu Bakr and now it is on their lips." Abu Hurayrah said, " 'Umar said, 'By Allah, when Abu Bakr recited it I began to feel dizzy and my legs would not carry me, and I fell to the ground. And I knew that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had died.' "»¹⁵⁹

3. 'Umar During the Caliphate of Abu Bakr

3.1. His stance in Saqeefah Bani Sâ'idah and his oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr

Following the death of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Anṣār gathered around Sa'd ibn 'Ubâdah in Saqeefah Bani Sâ'idah and said: «"A leader from among us and a leader from among you." Abu Bakr, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh went to them, and 'Umar started to speak, but Abu Bakr told him to be quiet. 'Umar used to say: "By Allah, all I wanted to do was to say some words that I had prepared in my mind that I thought were good, for I was afraid that Abu Bakr might not be able to convey the message effectively." Then Abu Bakr began to speak, and he spoke very eloquently. He said: "We will be the leaders and you will be the advisors." Ḥabbâb

¹⁵⁹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Janâ'iz*, hadith no. 1242.

ibn al-Mundhir said: "No, by Allah, we will not do it. A leader from among us and a leader from among you." Abu Bakr said: "No, rather we will be the leaders and you will be the advisors. They are the most prominent among the Arabs and the best in lineage. Give your allegiance to 'Umar or to Abu 'Ubaydah." 'Umar said: "Rather we will give our allegiance to you, for you are our leader and the best of us, and the most beloved to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." Then 'Umar took him by the hand and swore his allegiance to him, and the people did likewise.»¹⁶⁰

May Allah be pleased with 'Umar and make him pleased. When the people's voices grew loud in as-Saqeefah and there was much disagreement, and 'Umar feared division — and the danger that he most feared was that someone would start to swear allegiance to one of the Anṣār, which would cause great tribulation, and it would not be easy to resolve the matter once people had started to swear allegiance to someone else — then he hastened to pre-empt any tribulation.¹⁶¹ And he said to the Anṣār:

«“O' Anṣār, do you not know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer? Who among you would feel comfortable putting himself above Abu Bakr?” The Anṣār said, “Allah forbid that we should put ourselves above Abu Bakr.”»¹⁶² Then 'Umar hastened to say to Abu Bakr, “Stretch forth your hand.” So he stretched forth his hand and 'Umar swore allegiance to him, and the *Muhājireen* swore allegiance to him, then the Anṣār did so.»¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ *Musnad Aḥmad*, 1/213; Aḥmad Shâkir classed its isnad as *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁶¹ *Al-Ḥikmah fee ad-Da'wah ila Allâh*, by Sa'eed al-Qaṭṭāni, p. 226.

¹⁶² *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 1/280.

¹⁶³ Bukhari, *Kitâb Faḍâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3668.

On the Tuesday, Abu Bakr sat on the *minbar*, and 'Umar stood up and spoke before Abu Bakr. He praised and glorified Allah as He deserves, then he said: "O' people, yesterday I said things to you that were not appropriate; I did not find that in the Book of Allah and that was not something that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told me. But I thought that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would continue to lead us until he would be the last one of us to die. But Allah has left amongst you His Book in which is the guidance of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). If you adhere to it, Allah will guide you to that to which He guided him. Allah has united you under the leadership of the best among you, the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), the second of two when they were in the cave, so get up and swear your allegiance to him." So the people swore their allegiance to Abu Bakr in a public oath of allegiance that took place after the oath of allegiance at as-Saqeefah.¹⁶⁴ 'Umar encouraged the people and urged them to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr until Allah united all the Muslims under his leadership. Thus Allah saved them from division and tribulation. This is the stance that 'Umar took with the people in order to unite them under the leadership of Abu Bakr. This is one of the wisest stances which deserves to be recorded in letters of gold.¹⁶⁵

'Umar feared that the Muslims would become divided and that the flames of internal division would erupt, so he took pre-emptive action by hastening to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr and he encouraged the people to do likewise in a public oath of allegiance. This action of his saved the Muslims from the greatest tribulation that would have befallen them were it not for his brilliant intuition, which came second only to the help of Allah.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 6/305, 306. its isnad is *ṣaḥeḥ*.

¹⁶⁵ *Al-Hikmah fee ad-Da'wah ila Allâh*, p. 227.

¹⁶⁶ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by 'Abdul-Wahhâb an-Najjâr, p. 123.

3.2. His discussion with Abu Bakr with regard to fighting those who withheld zakah and sending the army of Usâmah

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: «When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died and Abu Bakr succeeded him and some of the Arabs reverted to *kufr*, 'Umar said, "O' Abu Bakr, how can you fight the people when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'I have been ordered to fight the people until they say *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh*, and whoever says *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh*, his wealth and life are safe from me, except in cases decreed by shari'ah, and his reckoning will be with Allah'?" Abu Bakr said, "By Allah, I will fight whoever separates prayer and zakah, for zakah is what is due on wealth. By Allah, if they withhold from me a young female goat that they used to give to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), I will fight them for withholding it." 'Umar said, "By Allah, when I saw that Allah had opened Abu Bakr's heart to (the idea of) fighting, I knew that it was right."»¹⁶⁷

When some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* suggested to Abu Bakr that the army of Usâmah should stay put until things had calmed down, Usâmah sent a message with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb from his camp at al-Jaraf to Abu Bakr, asking him for permission to bring the people back. He said: "There are some of the most prominent and most respected Muslims with me, and I fear for the successor of the Messenger of Allah (i.e., the caliph) and the wives of the Messenger of Allah and the Muslims, that they may be harmed by the *mushrikeen*."¹⁶⁸ But Abu Bakr disagreed with that and insisted that he should go ahead with his military campaign and set out towards Syria, no matter what the circumstances or the outcome. The Anṣār

¹⁶⁷ Bukhari, *Kitâb Istitâbah al-Murtaddeena wa al-Mu'ânideen*, hadith no. 6566.

¹⁶⁸ *Al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/226.

requested that a man older than Usâmah should be put in command of the army, and they sent 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to talk to Abu Bakr about that. 'Umar said: "The Anṣār are requesting that a man older than Usâmah should be put in command of the army." Abu Bakr had been sitting down but he leapt up and grabbed 'Umar by the beard and said: "May your mother be bereft of you, O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb! The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) appointed him and you are telling me to dismiss him?"¹⁶⁹ 'Umar went out to the people and they said: "What did you do?" He said: "Go away, may your mothers be bereft of you! It is because of you that the successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was harsh with me."¹⁷⁰

3.3. 'Umar and the return of Mu'âdh from Yemen, his true insight concerning Abu Muslim al-Khawlâni, and his opinion regarding the appointment of Abân ibn Sa'eed as governor of Bahrain

3.3.1. 'Umar and the return of Mu'âdh from Yemen

Mu'âdh ibn Jabal stayed in Yemen during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), where he strove hard in calling people to Islam and in fighting the apostates. After the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died, he came to Madeenah. 'Umar said to Abu Bakr, "Send for this man and leave him with enough for him to live on but take everything else from him." Abu Bakr said: "No, the Prophet (ﷺ) sent him to help him; I will not take anything from him except what he gives to me." 'Umar thought that Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was not taking any notice of his opinion, but 'Umar was convinced that he was right. He went to

¹⁶⁹ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/46.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Mu'ādh, hoping that he might agree. Mu'ādh said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) only sent me to help me; I will not do it." 'Umar did not go to Abu Bakr to seek his help against Mu'ādh, but he wanted what was best for Mu'ādh and for the Muslims, but here was Mu'ādh rejecting 'Umar's advice. 'Umar knew that he had no power over Mu'ādh, so he went away, accepting that fact, because he had done his duty of offering advice. But after rejecting 'Umar's advice, Mu'ādh saw something that made him go to 'Umar and say: "I will obey you, I will do what you told me to do, for I saw in a dream that I was in deep water and I feared that I might drown, but you saved me from it, O 'Umar." Then Mu'ādh went to Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) and told him the whole story, and swore that he was not hiding anything from him. Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said: "We will not take anything that has been given to you as a gift."¹⁷¹ According to another report, Abu Bakr said to Mu'ādh: "Give us your accounts." Mu'ādh said: "Am I to give account twice, once to Allah and once to you? By Allah, I will never do any task for you."¹⁷²

3.3.2. His true intuition concerning Abu Muslim al-Khawlāni

'Umar was blessed with a kind of intuition which is rarely seen in this life. Adh-Dhahabi narrated that al-Aswad al-'Ansi was claiming to be a Prophet in Yemen. He sent for Abu Muslim al-Khawlāni and prepared a great fire, then he threw Abu Muslim into it, but it did not harm him... It was said to al-Aswad, "If you do not get rid of him, he will confuse your followers." So he told him to leave, and he came to Madeenah. He made his mount kneel down, then he entered the mosque, where 'Umar saw him and got up to meet him.

¹⁷¹ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 69, quoting from *al-Isti'āb*, 3/338.

¹⁷² *Ayoon al-Akhhār*, 1/125.

He asked, "Where is this man from?" He said, "From Yemen." He asked, "What happened to the one whom the liar burned with fire?" He said, "That was 'Abdullāh ibn Thuwab." He then asked, "I adjure you by Allah, are you he?" He said, "Yes, by Allah." 'Umar embraced him and wept, then he took him and seated him between himself and Abu Bakr and said, "Praise be to Allah Who did not cause me to die until I had seen among the ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) one to whom was done the same as was done to Ibraheem al-Khaleel."¹⁷³

3.3.3. His opinion regarding the appointment of Abân ibn Sa'eed as governor of Bahrain

Abu Bakr (ﷺ) used to consult the *Ṣaḥābah* before appointing governors. It was narrated that he consulted his companions concerning the one whom he wanted to send to Bahrain. 'Uthmân said to him: "Send a man whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent before, who had brought his people to the Prophet (ﷺ) to declare their Islam and obedience, whom they know and he knows them." And he also said: "Force Abân ibn Sa'eed ibn al-'Âṣ (to be governor), for he is a man who had an alliance with them," But Abu Bakr refused to force him, and said: "I will not force any man who says that he will not work for anyone after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." Then Abu Bakr decided to send al-'Ala' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami to Bahrain.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 4/9-4; *Aṣḥâb ar-Rasool*, 1/137.

¹⁷⁴ *Al-Quyood al-Wâridah 'ala Sulṭat ad-Dawlah* by 'Abdullāh al-Kaylânî, p. 169.

3.4. 'Umar's view that *diyyah* should not be accepted for the slain Muslims, and his objection to Abu Bakr giving land to al-Aqra' ibn Ḥâbis and 'Uyaynah ibn Ḥaṣan

3.4.1. 'Umar's view that *diyyah* should not be accepted for the Muslims slain during the Riddah wars

The delegation of Buzâkhah came from Asad and Ghatafan to Abu Bakr to ask him for a peace treaty, and he gave them the choice between a destructive war and a humiliating peace. They said: "We know what destruction means, but what is this humiliation?" He said: "We will take away from you your weapons and horses, we will keep as war booty whatever we captured from you, and you will return whatever you captured from us. You will pay *diyyah* for our slain, but your slain are in Hell. You will be left like people who follow the tails of camels until Allah shows the successor of His Messenger (ﷺ) and the *Muhâjireen* a way to forgive you." Abu Bakr told the *Ṣaḥâbah* what he had said, and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb stood up and said: "I will give you my opinion. As for what you said about a destructive war or a humiliating peace, that is a good idea. As for what you said about us keeping as war booty what we captured from them and them returning what they captured from us, that is a good idea. As for what you said about them paying the *diyyah* for our slain and their slain being in Hell, our slain fought and were killed for the sake of Allah, and their reward is with Allah, so there should be no *diyyah* for them." So he concluded the treaty with them on the basis of what 'Umar said.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 362, quoting from *ar-Riyâḍ an-Naḍrah*, *Nayl al-Awṭâr*, 8/22.

3.4.2. His objection to Abu Bakr giving land to al-Aqra' ibn Ḥâbis and 'Uyaynah ibn Ḥaṣan

'Uyaynah ibn Ḥaṣan and al-Aqra' ibn Ḥâbis came to Abu Bakr (ﷺ) and said: "O' Successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), there is some swampy land where no grass grows and it is of no use. Why don't you give it to us to cultivate it, so that perhaps there will be some benefit in it after today?" Abu Bakr said to those who were around him, "What do you think of what they said, if it is swampy land that is of no use?" They said, "We think that you should give it to them, so that perhaps there will be some benefit in it after today." So he gave it to them and wrote a document for them stating that it was theirs. He wanted 'Umar to witness it, but he was not among the people, so they went to 'Umar and asked him to bear witness. They found him applying pitch to a camel of his and said, "Abu Bakr has asked you to bear witness to what is in this document. Shall we read it to you or will you read it?" He said, "I am as you see I am, if you wish you can read it and if you wish you can wait until I am finished and I will read it myself." They said, "No, we will read it." So they read it and when he heard what was in the document, he took it from their hands, then he spat on it and wiped it (i.e., obliterated what was written). They complained about that and said something bad. He said, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to be kind to you, and Islam was in a weak position at that time. Now Allah has made Islam strong, so go and work hard. May you never succeed if you graze your flocks in that land!" They went to Abu Bakr and started to complain, saying, "By Allah, we do not know if you are the caliph or 'Umar." He said, "No, he could have been the caliph if he had wanted to be." Then 'Umar came, and he was angry. He stood over Abu Bakr and said, "Tell me about this land that you gave to these two. Is it your own land or does it belong to all the Muslims?" He said, "No, it belongs to all the Muslims." He said, "Then what made

you give it to these two only and not to all the Muslims?" He said, "I consulted these people who were around me and that is what they advised me to do." He said, "If you consulted those who were around you, did you consult all the other Muslims, and were they pleased with it?" Abu Bakr (ؓ) said, "I told you that you were more qualified for this role than I, but you insisted."¹⁷⁶

This incident leaves no room for doubt that the rule of the Islamic state at the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs was based on *shoora* or consultation. It shows us that the successor to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was keen to consult the Muslims concerning both minor and major matters, and that he would not take any decision without consulting his brothers.¹⁷⁷

The report quoted above shows us that *shoora* was practised in all decisions concerning the Muslims' affairs and, moreover, that Abu Bakr would be willing to surrender his opinion, even though he was who he was. This is a picture of *shoora* as it should be, within the framework of the commands of Allah and the rulings on what is *ḥalāl* and what is *ḥarām*. It is not the pseudo-*shoora* that is enacted in parliaments from which the people have gained nothing but the bitterness of oppression, injustice and loss.¹⁷⁸

3.5. The compilation of the Holy Qur'an

Among the Muslims who were martyred during the war of al-Yamamah were many who had memorized the Qur'an, as a result of which Abu Bakr (ؓ) consulted 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) about

¹⁷⁶ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb fee Faḍā'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, 1/ 262.

¹⁷⁷ *Istikhlāf Abi Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq* by Jamāl 'Abdul-Hādī, Pp. 166, 167.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 167.

compiling the Qur'an by collecting the pieces of cloth, bones and palm leaves on which it had been written and gathering it "from the hearts of men".¹⁷⁹ Abu Bakr delegated this extremely important task to the *Ṣaḥābi* Zayd ibn Thābit al-Anṣārī. Zayd ibn Thābit (رضي الله عنه) said: «"Abu Bakr sent for me after many people were killed at al-Yamāmah."¹⁸⁰ There I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb with him. Abu Bakr said that 'Umar came to him and said, 'The killing on the day of al-Yamāmah has taken its toll of those who had knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, and I fear that more will be killed in other battles, and much of the Qur'an may disappear. So I think that you should issue orders that the Qur'an be compiled.' I said to 'Umar, 'How can I do something that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not do?' 'Umar said, 'By Allah, this is something good. 'Umar kept on talking to me about it until Allah opened my heart to that to which He had opened 'Umar's heart, and I realized the same as 'Umar had realized concerning the matter.'» Zayd said that Abu Bakr said: "You are a young and intelligent man and we think highly of you; you used to write down the Revelation for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). So seek out the Qur'an and collect it." Zayd said: "By Allah, if he had ordered me to move a mountain it would not have been harder for me than what he ordered me to do of collecting the Qur'an."»¹⁸¹

We may derive a number of conclusions from the story of the collection of the Holy Qur'an, including the following:

1. That the collection of the Holy Qur'an came about as the result of the fear that it might be lost because of the deaths, during the Riddah wars, of many of those who knew it well. This indicates that the scholars and those who had knowledge of the Qur'an at that time

¹⁷⁹ *Huroob ar-Riddah wa Bina' ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah*, Aḥmad Sa'eed, p. 145.

¹⁸⁰ i.e., the battle of al-Yamāmah against the liar Musaylimah and his brethren.

¹⁸¹ Bukhari, hadith no. 4986.

were the quickest of people to act and engage in jihad to support Islam and the Muslims with their ideas, behaviour and swords. They were the best nation ever raised for mankind and all those who come after them should follow their example.

2. The collection of the Qur'an was based on the general interests of the Muslims. Nothing is more indicative of that than 'Umar's reply when Abu Bakr asked him, "How can you do something that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not do?" and he said, "By Allah, it is something good." According to some versions, he said to him: "By Allah it is good and in the interests of the Muslims." This is the same thing that Abu Bakr said to Zayd when he asked the same question. Whether the report which mention the interests of the Muslims is *ṣaḥeeḥ* or not, the usage of the word *khayr* ("good") conveys the same meaning, which is that it was in the interests of the Muslims to gather the Qur'an. The collecting of the Qur'an was initially based on the general interests of the Muslims, after which consensus was formed and everyone agreed with it, explicitly or implicitly. This indicates that the general interests of the Muslims (*al-maṣlaḥah al-mursalah*) may be taken as a sound basis for consensus with regard to those scholars who believe that it is a valid foundation for some actions.

3. This incident also shows us clearly how the *Ṣaḥābah* used to discuss matters in a calm manner in an atmosphere of love and respect and with the aim of achieving that which was in the general interests of the Muslims. It also shows that they would adopt the sound view and be content with it after discussing the matter and reaching their conclusions. Once they were convinced of an opinion they would defend it as if it had been their view from the outset. In this manner they formed consensus on many rulings of *ijtihād*.¹⁸²

¹⁸² *Al-Ijtihād fee al-Fiqh al-Islāmi*, by 'Abdus-Salām as-Sulaymāni, p. 127.

CHAPTER THREE

Abu Bakr's Appointment of 'Umar as his Successor, the Bases and Principles of his Rule and his Life in Society

1. Abu Bakr's Appointment of 'Umar as his Successor and the Bases and Principles of his Rule

1.1. Abu Bakr's appointment of 'Umar as his successor

When Abu Bakr's sickness grew intense, the people gathered around him and he said: "There has befallen me what you see and I think I am going to die soon. Allah has freed you from your oath of allegiance to me, and your oath is no longer binding. Your affairs are in your hands, so appoint over you whomever you like. If you appoint someone whilst I am still alive, I think it is less likely that you will become divided after I am gone."¹

The *Ṣaḥābah* consulted one another, each of them trying to refuse the position of caliph for himself and seeking it for his brother whom he thought was fit and qualified for it. Hence they came back

¹ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/18; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/238.

to him and said: "We have decided to leave it to you, O' Successor (*khaleefah*) of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." He said: "Give me time so that I may choose someone who will be most pleasing to Allah, most protective of His religion and His slaves." Then Abu Bakr called 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf and said to him: "Tell me about 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb." He said: "You do not ask me about a matter but you have more knowledge of it than I." Abu Bakr said: "Even so (tell me)." 'Abdur-Raḥmān said: "By Allah, he is better than you think he is." Then he called 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān and said: "Tell me about 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb." He said: "You know better than I do." He said: "Even so (tell me), O' Abu 'Abdullāh." 'Uthmān said: "By Allah, what I know is that what he conceals is better than what he shows outwardly, and there is no one else like him among us." Abu Bakr said: "May Allah have mercy on you, by Allah if I were not to choose him I would not choose anyone but you." Then he called Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr and asked him a similar question, and Usayd said: "By Allah, I know that he is best after you. He is pleased with that which pleases Allah and is angry with that which angers Allah, and what he conceals is better than that which he shows outwardly. This matter (the caliphate) will never pass to anyone who is more able for it than him." He (Abu Bakr) also consulted Sa'eed ibn Zayd and a number of the Anṣār and *Muhājireen* and almost all of them were of one mind concerning 'Umar, except for Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydullāh, who was concerned about 'Umar's harshness and said to Abu Bakr: "What will you say to your Lord when He asks you about appointing 'Umar over us when you have seen how harsh he is?" Abu Bakr said: "Sit me up. Are you trying to make me fear Allah? (Any ruler) who does you wrong is doomed. I will say: 'O' Allah, I appointed over them the best of your people.'"² He explained to them the reason why 'Umar was so harsh and strict and said: "That is because he

² *Al-Kāmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/79; *Tāreekh al-Islāmi* by Maḥmūd Shākīr, p. 101.

thinks I am too soft and gentle; when he is in charge he will change a great deal.”³ Then he put in writing a document to be read to the people of Madeenah and the Anṣār by the commander of the army, the text of which was as follows:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

This is what has been decided by Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quḥāfah at the end of his life as he is departing this world and as he enters the Hereafter, at the time (i.e., as death approaches) when *kāfirs* become believers and evildoers become certain (of their fate). I was only trying to do good for the sake of Allah and His Messenger and His religion and for myself and for you. If ('Umar) turns out to be fair and just, then this is what I think and know him to be, but if he changes then each person will be responsible for what he does. I intended nothing but good, and I have no knowledge of the unseen.

﴿... And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.﴾ (Qur'an 26: 227)”

The appointment of 'Umar was the last advice that Abu Bakr gave to the ummah. He realized that the temptation of worldly luxuries was becoming a reality and that the Muslims had lived a life of poverty that he knew all too well; he knew that if these people saw the luxuries of this world, they might indulge in their desires and thus it would influence them and dominate them, and that was what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had warned them against.⁴ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“By Allah, it is not poverty that I fear for you, rather my fear is that worldly luxury may become available to you as it became available to those who came before you, and that you will start competing in acquiring it as they competed and it will destroy

³ *Al-Kāmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/79.

⁴ *Tāreekh al-Islām* by adh-Dhahabi, 'Ahd al-Khulafā', Pp. 66-117; *Abu Bakr Rajul ad-Dawlah*, p. 99.

you as it destroyed them.”⁵ Abu Bakr understood the problem so he was offering them an effective remedy... ‘Umar was like a solid mountain which, if worldly luxury saw him, it would despair of him and flee. He was the man of whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «‘O’ son of al-Khaṭṭāb, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, the *Shayṭān* never sees you coming on a path but he takes another path.”⁶

The grave events which the ummah passed through began with the slaying of ‘Umar. These adversities are the best testimony to the intuition of Abu Bakr when he appointed ‘Umar as his successor. It was narrated that ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ood said: “The most intuitive of people were three: the lady who said of Prophet Moosa (ﷺ):

«... O’ my father! Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy.» (Qur’an 28: 26)

— the companion of Prophet Yoosuf (ﷺ) when he said,

«... Make his stay comfortable, may be he will profit us or we shall adopt him as a son...» (Qur’an 12: 21)

— and Abu Bakr when he appointed ‘Umar as his successor.”⁷

‘Umar was the dam that shielded the ummah from the waves of *fitmah*.⁸

‘Umar also spoke of the steps that he was going to take. ‘Umar came to him, and Abu Bakr told him what he had decided to do concerning his appointment. ‘Umar refused to accept it, and Abu Bakr threatened him with the sword, so ‘Umar had no choice but to accept.⁹ Abu Bakr wanted to tell the people himself whilst he was conscious and aware

⁵ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Jizyah wa al-Muwāda‘ah*, hadith no. 3158.

⁶ Bukhari, *Kitāb Faḍā’il Aṣḥāb an-Nabi*, hadith no. 3683.

⁷ *Majma‘ az-Zawā’id*, 10/268, with a *ṣaheeh* isnad.

⁸ *Abu Bakr Rajul ad-Dawlah*, p. 100.

⁹ *Ma‘āthir al-Anāfah*, 1/49.

of what he was saying, so that there would be no confusion. So he looked out over the people and said to them: "Do you accept the one whom I appoint as your leader? For by Allah I have tried to appoint the best; I have not appointed a relative. I have appointed as your leader 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, so listen to him and obey." They said: "We will listen and obey."¹⁰ Then Abu Bakr turned in *du'ā'* to Allah, expressing his concerns to Him. He said: "I have appointed him not by the command of Your Prophet, seeking nothing but what is in their best interests. I fear *fitnah* for them and I have thought long and hard about the matter. I have appointed over them the best of them and the one who is most keen to lead them in the right way. Now here I am with Your decree about to be fulfilled. Take care of them after I am gone for they are Your slaves."¹¹

Abu Bakr commanded 'Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) to read this will to the people and to receive their oaths of allegiance (*bay'ah*) to 'Umar before Abu Bakr died, after sealing the will to give it more authenticity and to ensure that this order would be carried out without any negative effects. 'Uthmān said to the people: "Will you swear allegiance the one who is named in this will?" They said: "Yes". So they all accepted that and approved of it.¹² After the will had been read to the people and they had agreed to it, they turned to 'Umar and gave him their oaths of allegiance.¹³ Then Abu Bakr spent some time alone with 'Umar and gave him some advice so as to absolve himself of all responsibility and so that he could meet his Lord free from any responsibility after having done his best.¹⁴ Among the advice he gave

¹⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/248.

¹¹ *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, 3/199; *Tāreekh al-Madeenah* by Ibn Shabḥah, 2/665-669.

¹² *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, 3/200.

¹³ *Dirāsāt fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah* by ash-Shujā', p. 272.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

was the following: "Fear Allah, O' 'Umar, and know that there are some deeds to be done for Allah during the day, which He will not accept at night, and some deeds to be done during the night which He will not accept during the day; He does not accept any *nafl* deeds until the obligatory duties have been done. Those whose deeds will weigh heavily in the Balance on the Day of Resurrection will do so only because of their following the truth, thus they will become heavy. And those whose deeds will weigh lightly in the Balance on the Day of Resurrection will do so only because of their following falsehood, thus they will become light. Allah has mentioned the people of Paradise and He mentions only the best of their deeds and overlooks their bad deeds, and when I think of them I say: I fear that I will not be one of them. And Allah has mentioned the people of Hell and He mentions only the worst of their deeds, and rejects their good deeds, and when I think of them I say: I hope that I will not be among them. One should be hoping for Paradise and fearing Hell, without having too much hope or despairing of the mercy of Allah. If you listen to my advice, no absent thing will be more hateful to you than death, but you cannot escape it."¹⁵

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb started to act as the caliph of the Muslims as soon as Abu Bakr (ﷺ) passed away.¹⁶

It may be noted that Abu Bakr's nomination of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb could not have made him caliph unless it was based on the consent of the majority. This was achieved when Abu Bakr asked the people to look themselves for a successor to take the reins of leadership after he died. They put the matter back in his hands and said, we will follow your opinion.¹⁷ But Abu Bakr did not nominate

¹⁵ *Ṣifāt aṣ-Ṣafwāh*, 1/264, 265.

¹⁶ *Dirāsāt fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 272.

¹⁷ *Al-Quyūd al-Wāridah 'ala Sulṭat ad-Dawlah fee al-Islām*, p. 172.

'Umar until after consulting the most prominent *Ṣaḥābah*. He asked each one individually, and when he realized that they all agreed, he announced his nomination of 'Umar. So Abu Bakr's choice was based on the opinion of the ummah as expressed through its most prominent figures. But this nomination could not make 'Umar the caliph except with the ummah's consent, because the election of the ruler is the right of the ummah, and the caliph is no more than an agent who acts on behalf of the ummah, so he must have the consent of those on whose behalf he is acting. Hence Abu Bakr turned to the ummah and asked them: "Do you accept the one whom I appoint as your leader? For by Allah I have tried to appoint the best; I have not appointed a relative. I have appointed as your leader 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, so listen to him and obey." They said: "We will listen and obey."¹⁸ The words of Abu Bakr, "Will you accept the one whom I appoint as your leader?" indicate that the ummah is to control its own affairs and that this is the business of the ummah.¹⁹

'Umar assumed the position of caliph by the consensus of the decision makers, for they are the ones who delegated to Abu Bakr the task of selecting the next caliph, and they made him their deputy in that. So he consulted people, then he appointed the next caliph, then he announced this appointment to the people and they approved it and agreed with it. The decision makers in the ummah are the natural representatives of the ummah. Hence we see that the appointment of 'Umar was done in accordance with the most sound and fair principles of *shoora*.²⁰

The steps which Abu Bakr took to appoint the caliph who would succeed him did not go beyond the framework of *shoora* at all,

¹⁸ *Tāreekh al-Ṭabari*, 4/248.

¹⁹ *Al-Quyood al-Wāridah 'ala Sulṭat ad-Dawlah fee al-Islām*, p. 172.

²⁰ *Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq*, by 'Ali al-Ṭanṭāwī, p. 237.

even though the procedure differed from that by means of which Abu Bakr himself was elected.²¹ Thus 'Umar was elected caliph by means of *shoora* and consensus. History does not record any dispute that arose concerning his caliphate after that; throughout his reign no one stood up to dispute the matter, rather he became caliph by universal acclaim and there was consensus that he was to be obeyed throughout his rule. Thus they were all united.²²

1.2. *Shar'i* texts which indicate that 'Umar was more entitled to the caliphate

— 1 —

In the Qur'an there are verses which point to the validity of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân (may Allah be pleased with them) and show that obedience to them was obligatory. Allah said, addressing His Prophet (ﷺ) concerning the Bedouin:

«If Allah brings you back to a party of them [the hypocrites], and they ask your permission to go out [to fight], say, 'Never shall you go out with me nor fight an enemy with me'...» (Qur'an 9: 83)

Soorah at-Tawbah was undoubtedly revealed after the campaign of Tabook²³, from which the three who were forgiven stayed behind, the acceptance of whose repentance was revealed in *Soorah at-Tawbah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not take part in any military campaign after Tabook until he died. And Allah (ﷻ) said:

²¹ *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 272.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ad-Durr al-Manthoor fee at-Tafseer al-Ma'thoor*, 4/119, 122.

«Those who lagged behind will say, when you set forth to take the spoils, 'Allow us to follow you.' They want to change Allah's Words. Say, 'You shall not follow us; thus Allah has said beforehand.'...»

(*Qur'an* 48: 15)

This shows that the Bedouin were not to go out on military campaigns with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) after Tabook for this reason. Then, after saying that they were not to go on campaigns with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), Allah says:

«Say [O' Muhammad] to the bedouins who lagged behind, 'You shall be called to fight against a people given to great warfare, then you shall fight them, or they shall surrender. Then if you obey, Allah will give you a fair reward; but if you turn away as you did turn away before, He will punish you with a painful torment.'» (*Qur'an* 48: 16)

Here Allah is telling them that someone other than the Prophet (ﷺ) would call them to fight certain people or they surrender, and He promised them a great reward if they obeyed the one who called them to that, and warned them of a painful punishment if they disobeyed the one who called them.²⁴

Abu Muhammad ibn Ḥazm said: "No one called these Bedouins to 'fight certain people or they surrender' after the Prophet (ﷺ) except Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with them). Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) called them to fight the Arabs of Banu Ḥaneefah who had apostatized, the companions of al-Aswad, Sajjāh and Tulayḥah, and the Byzantines and Persians, and others. 'Umar called them to fight the Byzantines and Persians, and 'Uthmān called them to fight the Byzantines, Persians and Turks.²⁵ So it was obligatory to obey Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān (may Allah be

²⁴ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah fee aṣ-Ṣaḥābah al-Kirām*, 2/634.

²⁵ *Al-I'tiqād* by al-Bayhaqi, p. 173.

pleased with them) according to a clear and definitive text of the Qur'an which could not be interpreted in any other way. If it was obligatory to obey them, this means that their leadership and caliphate was valid.²⁶

— 2 —

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Whilst I was sleeping, I saw myself drawing water from a well with a bucket. Abu Bakr came and drew a bucket or two weakly. May Allah forgive him. Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came and the bucket turned into a very large one in his hands. I had never seen any one so strong doing this task, all the people drank their fill and watered their camels that knelt down there.”»²⁷

This hadith points to the caliphate of the two *shaykhs* (Abu Bakr and 'Umar — may Allah be pleased with them); it also refers to 'Umar, his era and the great conquests that would take place during his time. This Prophetic dream is a clear example of what would happen to Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) during their caliphates and points to their good ways and the great impact they would have, and how the people would benefit from both of them. All of that came about as the result of their being influenced by the Prophet (ﷺ); he is the one who set the whole thing in motion and he did a perfect job when he established the foundation of this religion and explained its principles and major and minor issues. The people had entered the religion of Allah in crowds, then Allah (ﷻ) revealed the words:

«... This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My

²⁶ *Al-Faṣl fī al-Mīlāl wa al-Aḥwā' wa an-Niḥāl*, 4/109, 110.

²⁷ Muslim, hadith no. 2393.

Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion... ﴿
 (Qur'an 5: 3)

When the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) succeeded him as leader of the ummah for two years and a few months. This is what is referred to by the words, "[he] drew a bucket or two". The narrator was uncertain, but what was meant was two buckets, as is clearly stated in another report.²⁸ During his caliphate wars were fought against the apostates and their movement was utterly finished off. At the time of 'Umar, Islam spread further during his time, many rulings of Islam were enacted as never before, the reason being that his caliphate was lengthy and Islam reached many lands and much wealth was acquired through booty and other means. This hadith also points to the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate and describes its characteristics and how the Muslims would benefit from it.²⁹

— 3 —

It was narrated that Hudhayfah said: «We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said, "I do not know how long I have left among you, so follow the two who come after me" — and he pointed to Abu Bakr and 'Umar — "and adhere to the guidance of 'Ammâr, and whatever Ibn Mas'ood tells you, believe it."»³⁰ This hadith clearly points to the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate because the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "follow the two who come after me", meaning the two caliphs who would come after him, Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

²⁸ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah fee aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah al-Kirâm*, 2/635.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh al-Albâni, 3/233, 236; *Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Hibbân*, 15/328; *Muṣannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, 7/433; classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Shaykh al-Albâni in *aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥ*, 3/333-336.

The Prophet's command to obey them is indicative of his praise for them. Because they were qualified to be obeyed and heeded in whatever they commanded and forbade, which is indicative of the goodness of their conduct and sincerity of their hearts, and was a hint that they would be caliphs after he was gone. The reason why he encouraged the Muslims to follow the early generations was their good nature and attitude. Hence they were the best of people after the Prophets and the best of people after them were those who followed them in truth; this will remain so until the Day of Judgement.³¹

— 4 —

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Whilst I was sleeping I saw a vessel being brought to me in which there was milk. I drank from it until I could see its moisture coming out of my fingers. Then I gave my leftovers to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.” They said, “How did you interpret that, O’ Messenger of Allah?” He said, “Knowledge.”³²

This hadith points to the legitimacy of ‘Umar’s caliphate. What is meant by knowledge here is knowledge of how to rule people according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). ‘Umar is singled out in this manner because of the length of his caliphate compared to that of Abu Bakr, and because of how the people agreed to obey him compared with the case of ‘Uthmān. Abu Bakr’s caliphate was short, during which there were not many conquests which were among the greatest causes of dispute. Despite the length of his caliphate, ‘Umar ruled the people in such a way that no one disputed with him. Then the conquests expanded during the caliphate of ‘Uthmān, and different opinions and thoughts appeared,

³¹ *Fayḍ al-Qadeer* by al-Manāwī, 2/56.

³² Muslim, vol. 4, hadith nos. 1859, 1860.

and he did not enjoy the same consensus among the people to obey him that 'Umar had enjoyed. From this stemmed the tribulations which ultimately ended in his murder. He was succeeded by 'Ali and the dissent and tribulations only grew worse. So this hadith clearly points to the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate.³³

— 5 —

It was narrated from Abu Bakr that: «The Prophet (ﷺ) said one day, "Who among you has seen a dream?" A man said, "I saw as if a balance came down from heaven and you and Abu Bakr were weighed, and you weighed more than Abu Bakr. Then 'Umar and Abu Bakr were weighed and Abu Bakr weighed more. 'Umar and 'Uthmân were weighed and 'Umar weighed more. Then the balance was taken away." And we saw that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was unhappy.»³⁴

This hadith describes the three in order of virtue. The best of them is Abu Bakr, followed by 'Umar, followed by 'Uthmân (may Allah be pleased with them all). This hadith also points to the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate and indicates that he would become caliph after Abu Bakr (ﷺ). The reason why the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) looked unhappy was because he knew that the removal of the balance was a referral to the decline of the ummah's affairs and the emergence of tribulations after the caliphate of 'Umar.³⁵

³³ *Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah fee as-Şaḥâbah al-Kirâm*, 2/637.

³⁴ *Sunan Abi Dawood*, 2/512; *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, 4/540.

³⁵ *'Awn al-Ma'bood Sharḥ Sunan Abi Dawood*, 13/387.

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) used to narrate that: «A man came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said, "Last night I saw in a dream a cloud dripping butter and honey, and I saw the people scooping them up with their hands, some taking more and some taking less. And there was a rope stretched between heaven and earth. I saw you take hold of it and ascend, then another man took hold of it and ascended, then another man took hold of it and it broke, then was reconnected." Abu Bakr said, "O' Messenger of Allah, may my father be sacrificed for you, by Allah, let me try to interpret it." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Interpret it." He said, "As for the cloud, it is Islam. The dripping honey and butter are the Qur'an and its sweetness, and there are some who take a great deal of the Qur'an and some who take a little. The rope stretching from heaven to earth is the truth which you have held onto and it takes you up. Then another man takes hold of it and it takes him up, and another man takes hold of it and it breaks but then is connected and takes him up. Tell me O' Messenger of Allah, may my father be sacrificed for you, have I got it right or wrong?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said. "You have got some of it right and some of it wrong." He said. "By Allah, O' Messenger of Allah, tell me what I have got wrong." He said, "Do not swear."³⁶

This hadith points to the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate. The words "then another man took hold of it and ascended" refer to Abu Bakr and the words "then another man took hold of it and it broke" refer to the caliphate of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه).³⁷

³⁶ Muslim, vol. 4, hadith nos. 1777, 1778.

³⁷ *'Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah*, 2/638.

— 7 —

It was narrated that Anas said: «Banu al-Muṣṭalaq sent me to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said, "Ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for us, to whom should we give our zakah after you are gone?" He said, "So I came to him and asked him, and he said, 'To Abu Bakr.' I came to them and told them, and they said, 'Go back and ask him, if something happens to Abu Bakr, then to whom (should we give it)?' I came to him and asked him, and he said, 'To 'Umar.' So I went to them and told them..."»³⁸

This hadith indicates that 'Umar was entitled to the caliphate and that he would take control of the Muslims' affairs after the death of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه).³⁹

— 8 —

Another indication of the legitimacy of 'Umar's caliphate is the fact that the *Ṣaḥābah* were unanimously agreed that they would not nominate anyone but the best among them. This may be reinforced by what Abu Bakr and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both) said concerning him. Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said: "O' Allah, I have appointed as their leader the best of Your people."⁴⁰ With regard to what 'Ali (رضي الله عنه) said, this was narrated by Bukhari from Muhammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah — who was the son of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib — who said: «I asked my father: "Which of the people is best after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?" He said, "Abu Bakr." I then asked, "Then who?" He said, "Then 'Umar." And I was afraid that

³⁸ *Al-Mustadrak*, 3/77. This hadith has a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad; and adh-Dhahabi agreed with him.

³⁹ *'Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, 2/639.

⁴⁰ *At-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/274.

he would say 'Uthmân. I said, "Then you?" He said, "I am just one of the Muslims."»⁴¹

The *ahâdeeth* that we have mentioned here clearly indicate that 'Umar (ﷺ) was entitled to the caliphate.⁴²

As-Safâreeni (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "It should be noted that the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb, the Commander of the Faithful (ﷺ), is connected to the legitimacy of Abu Bakr's caliphate. The consensus of the ummah and the indications of the Qur'an and Sunnah indicate that his caliphate was well-founded. So whatever is accepted for the trunk (Abu Bakr) is also applicable to the branch ('Umar), and there is no room to cast aspersions or to dispute who is more entitled to the caliphate. The scholars knew definitively that the *Şahâbah* were unanimous in appointing Abu Bakr as caliph. If any one dissented, this odd view does not undermine the fact that there was undoubtedly consensus."⁴³

1.3. Consensus concerning the appointment of 'Umar is well established

A number of reliable scholars narrated that there was consensus among the *Şahâbah* and those who followed them concerning the caliphate of 'Umar, including the following:

— 1 —

Abu Bakr Aĥmad ibn al-Ĥusayn al-Bayhaqi narrated with an isnad going back to 'Abduġlâh ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ) that he said: "I came

⁴¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb aş-Şahâbah*, hadith no. 3671.

⁴² 'Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah fee aş-Şahâbah al-Kirâm, 2/640.

⁴³ *Lawâmi' al-Anwâr al-Bahiyah*, 2/326.

close to 'Umar when he had been stabbed, and said, "Receive the glad tidings of Paradise, O' Commander of the Faithful. You became Muslim when the people were still disbelievers, and you strove in jihad with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when the people opposed him, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was pleased with you, and no two people disputed concerning your caliphate, and you have been killed as a martyr." He said, "Say it again." So I said it again, and he said, "By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, if I had in my possession all the gold and silver on earth, I would have paid it to ransom myself from the terror of the Day of Judgement."⁴⁴

— 2 —

Abu Na'cem al-Aṣbahānī said, explaining the consensus on the caliphate of 'Umar: "Because of what Abu Bakr knew of the virtue and sincerity of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and his ability to do whatever task he asked him to do, and the help and advice that he had given him at different times, because Abu Bakr was sincere towards Allah and the Muslims, he would not have appointed anyone else to this position. Because Abu Bakr knew full well that the *Ṣaḥābah* recognized in 'Umar the sincerity and ability that he recognized, and that they knew him very well and there was no confusion concerning him, he gave this option (the appointment of 'Umar) to the Muslims and they accepted it. If they had had any doubts concerning him they would have opposed him and they would not have followed him and obeyed him as they did Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه). So his caliphate was well founded, as was that of Abu Bakr, and Abu Bakr acted as an advisor to them, pointing out the best and most perfect, so they accepted that advice from him and followed it."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Al-I'tiqād* by al-Bayhaqī, p. 188.

⁴⁵ *Kitāb al-Imāmah wa ar-Radd 'ala ar-Râfiḍah*, p. 274.

— 3 —

Abu 'Uthmân aṣ-Ṣâbooni said — after describing how Abu Bakr was appointed caliph by the choice and consensus of the *Ṣaḥâbah* —: “Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was appointed caliph by Abu Bakr, and by the consensus of the *Ṣaḥâbah* after he was gone. And by means of his leadership, Allah caused His religion to prevail.”⁴⁶

— 4 —

An-Nawawi said, when describing how the *Ṣaḥâbah* implemented the advice of Abu Bakr to appoint 'Umar as caliph: “They unanimously agreed to Abu Bakr's choice and to implement his appointment of 'Umar.”⁴⁷

— 5 —

Ibn Taymiyah said: “With regard to 'Umar, Abu Bakr appointed him as his successor and the Muslims swore their allegiance to him as their leader after the death of Abu Bakr. Thus he became caliph because of the power and authority he gained by means of their oath of allegiance.”⁴⁸

— 6 —

The commentator on *aṭ-Ṭaḥḥâwiyah* said:

⁴⁶ *'Aqeedat as-Salaf wa Aṣḥâb al-Ḥadeeth*, in *Majmoo'at ar-Rasâ'il al-Minbariyah*, 1/129.

⁴⁷ *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim*, 12/206.

⁴⁸ *Minḥâj as-Sunnah*, 1/143.

"After Abu Bakr (ﷺ), the caliphate passed to 'Umar (ﷺ) by means of Abu Bakr's appointing him as his successor, and the subsequent consensus of the ummah."⁴⁹

From the reports mentioned above, it is clear that 'Umar was appointed caliph by the unanimous agreement of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, as they accepted Abu Bakr's nomination of 'Umar as caliph and no one objected to that. This is the unanimous view of the saved group of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, who agree on that which the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) agree. No one differed from that except those whose opinion carries no weight, of those groups who bear grudges against some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), such as the Râfiḍi Shi'ah and those who followed them in this issue. Some may object to the consensus of the *Ṣaḥābah* mentioned above because of the report of Ibn Sa'd and others — according to which some of the *Ṣaḥābah* heard that 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf and 'Uthmān entered the place of Abu Bakr and one of them said: "What will you say to your Lord when He asks you why you appointed 'Umar as caliph over us, when you have seen how harsh he is?" Abu Bakr said: "Sit me up. Are you telling me to have fear of Allah? He is doomed who gains nothing from indulging in your affairs but wrongdoing. I shall say, 'O' Allah, I appointed over them as caliph the best of Your people. Tell those who are out there what I have said to you.'"⁵⁰ The answer to this objection — if this report is *ṣaḥeeḥ* — is that they said this not because they were unaware of 'Umar's superiority and his fitness to rule as the successor to Abu Bakr, but because they were concerned about his harshness. They were not making any accusations against him with regard to his ability and sincerity.⁵¹

⁴⁹ *Sharḥ at-Taḥḥāwiyah*, p. 539.

⁵⁰ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt li Ibn Sa'd*, 3/199.

⁵¹ *Kitāb al-Imāmah wa ar-Radd 'ala ar-Râfiḍah*, p. 276.

1.4. The speech given by 'Umar when he became caliph

Reports vary as to the first speech given by 'Umar. Some of them said that he ascended the *minbar* and said: "O' Allah, I am harsh so make me softer; I am weak so make me strong; I am stingy so make me generous."⁵²

And it was narrated that the first speech he gave was: "Allah is testing you with me and testing me with you after my two companions. By Allah, I will not delegate to anyone else any of your affairs that I can deal with directly, and if there is anything that I cannot deal with directly, I will try to delegate it to people who are able to deal with it and are trustworthy. By Allah, if they (governors) do well, I will reward them, and if they do badly, I will punish them." Those who heard his speech and narrated it said: "By Allah, that was his way until he departed this world."⁵³

And it was narrated that when he became caliph, he ascended the *minbar* and wanted to sit at the same level as Abu Bakr had sat, then he said: "I would not like Allah to see me putting myself on the same level as Abu Bakr." So he went down one step, then he praised Allah, then he said: "Read Qur'an and you will be recognized for it; act upon it and you will be among its people; bring yourselves to account before you are brought to account; prepare yourselves for the great parade on the Day when you will be brought to judgement before Allah and not a secret of you will be hidden (*cf. Qur'an 69: 18*). No one who is in a position to be obeyed should be obeyed in anything that involves disobedience towards Allah. With regard to the wealth of Allah, I see myself as being like the guardian of an orphan; if I find

⁵² *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 170, 171.

⁵³ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/275.

a means of being independent I will refrain from taking anything but if I need to, I will take on a reasonable basis.”⁵⁴

We can reconcile between these reports if we assume that ‘Umar delivered his speech in front of a number of people, some of whom remembered and reported some parts and others remembered and narrated other parts. There is nothing strange about Umar’s mixing political and administrative statements with religious exhortation in the first part of his speech, because that was the method of the early Imams who did not see any difference between fearing Allah and enjoining others to do likewise, and running the affairs of people in accordance with Allah’s laws. There is also nothing strange about ‘Umar showing respect to his predecessor Abu Bakr and not sitting in the same place as he used to sit, thus making himself equal with him in the people’s eyes. ‘Umar thought to himself and came down one degree from the place where Abu Bakr used to sit.⁵⁵

According to another report, two days after ‘Umar was appointed as caliph, the people started talking and saying how worried they were about his harshness and punishments, so ‘Umar realized that he had to clarify the matter himself. He ascended the *minbar* and addressed them, describing how the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr had been and what their method of dealing with people was, and how they had been pleased with ‘Umar when they died. Then he said:

“I have been appointed as your leader, O’ people, so understand that that harshness has become less, and it will only be applied to

⁵⁴ *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, no. 44214, quoting from *ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah* by Dr. Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 120.

⁵⁵ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fee ‘Aṣr al-Khulafa’ ar-Rāshideen*, by Dr. Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 120.

wrongdoers and oppressors. I will not allow anyone to oppress anyone else or to transgress the rights of others, but I will put his cheek on the ground and place my foot on his other cheek, until he submits to the truth. In contrast to that former harshness of mine, I will lay my own cheek on the ground before those who are humble and modest. O' people, I make some promises to you, which I will mention so that you will hold me to them. I promise that I will not take anything of your taxes or of the booty (*fay'*) that Allah grants to you, except in the proper manner. I promise you that whatever I do take, I will not spend it except in the proper manner. I promise you that I will increase your stipends, if Allah wills, and I will protect your borders. I promise you that I will not throw you into dangerous places or keep you away from your families for a long time to guard the borders; when you are away on military campaigns, I will be responsible for your children until you come back to them. Fear Allah, O' slaves of Allah, and help me by keeping your evil away from me and by enjoining what is good and what is evil and by giving me sincere advice with regard to the way I am running your affairs. I say these words of mine and I ask Allah to forgive me and you."⁵⁶

According to another report: "The likeness of the Arabs is that of an amenable yet proud camel following its driver, so let its driver watch where he is leading it. By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I will direct you to follow the (right) path."⁵⁷

From these reports of what 'Umar said in his speech when he became caliph, we can see clearly the method that he followed in his rule, from which he never deviated. The most important points of that method are as follows:

⁵⁶ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee 'Ahd al-Fârooq*, p. 106.

⁵⁷ *As-Siyâsah ash-Shar'iyah* by Dr. Isma'eel Badawi, p. 160, quoting from at-Tabari.

— 1 —

He regarded his caliphate as a trial with which he was being tested and for which he would be brought to account as to whether he had done his duty properly. According to the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them), rulership was a responsibility, an obligation and a trial. It was not the matter of status, honour and superiority.

— 2 —

This appointment required him to deal directly with matters of state in matters that he could handle himself, and to appoint over the people in other regions the best and most qualified of leaders. But — in 'Umar's view — that was not enough to absolve him of responsibility before Allah. Rather he believed that watching over these governors was an inescapable duty; he rewarded those of them who did well and punished those who did badly.⁵⁸ We will discuss this more fully below, when we look at the institution of governorship and the role that 'Umar played in its development.

— 3 —

The harshness which the people feared on 'Umar's part would turn into softness and mercy. He was going to set up the balance of justice, so that those who transgressed and wronged others would find nothing but humiliation and punishment: "I will not allow anyone to oppress anyone else or to transgress the rights of others, but I will put his cheek on the ground..." But those who were modest, religiously committed and humble would find unsurpassed mercy: "I

⁵⁸ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen*, p. 121.

will lay my own cheek on the ground before those who are humble and modest.”⁵⁹

We will see clearly how just 'Umar (عليه السلام) was towards the people when we look at different incidents and his concern with the judiciary system and how he developed it until justice prevailed in all the provinces of the Islamic state.

— 4 —

The caliph took on the responsibility of defending the ummah and its religion, and of defending the borders and warding off danger, but that was not going to be achieved by being unjust towards the fighters, therefore he was not going to keep them at the borders until they could no longer take it. When they were away with the army, the caliph and his administration would take care of their children and families.⁶⁰ 'Umar developed the military institutions and the Islamic state became a “superpower” that was unrivalled in the world at that time.

— 5 —

The caliph promised to pay the people all their dues in full from taxes and booty. He would not ask for any of it or spend any of it inappropriately. Rather he was going to give them more and increase their stipends as long as jihad and military campaigns continued. He urged the people to work hard and controlled the financial situation of the state⁶¹, regulating the income of the treasury (*bayt al-mâl*) and the way in which money was spent.

⁵⁹ Op. cit., p. 121; *Mahd as-Şawâb*, 1/385 (p. 116 note 4).

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aşr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 122.

— 6 —

In return for all that, he expected the people to do their duty of being sincere towards the caliph, listening to him and obeying him, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. This encouraged transparency and accountability in the Islamic society.

— 7 —

He drew attention to the fact that this could not be achieved except by fearing Allah, checking oneself and being aware that one would be brought to account in the Hereafter.⁶²

— 8 —

Shaykh 'Abdul-Wahhâb an-Najjâr commented on 'Umar's words, "The likeness of the Arabs is that of an amenable yet proud camel..." by saying: "The amenable camel is that which is easygoing, but does not like to be yelled at or beaten. It gives willingly and walks smoothly and easily. This is an apt description of the Muslim ummah at his time, because they used to listen and obey, when they were commanded to do something they would follow that command and when they were forbidden to do something they would heed that prohibition. As a result of that, the leader bore a great deal of responsibility: he had to run the ummah's affairs with wisdom and be careful in the way in which he took decisions, so that he would not lead the ummah down dangerous paths or expose it to risk, or neglect its affairs. What he meant by the (right) path was the straight path in which there is no crookedness. And he indeed fulfilled that which he swore he would do."⁶³

⁶² Op. cit., p. 122.

⁶³ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, p. 123.

— 9 —

With regard to harshness and gentleness, Allah has decreed that people will keep away from a harsh person even if he is sincere and desires good for them and cares about them.⁶⁴ This is indicated in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over [their faults], and ask [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs.﴾

(*Qur'an* 3: 159)

Hence when 'Umar was appointed caliph, his *du'â* was: "O' Allah, I am harsh so make me lenient." Allah answered this *du'â* and filled 'Umar's heart with compassion, mercy and kindness, which became his characteristics after he became caliph. During the time of the Messenger (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, the people knew him as strict and harsh, and history depicts him as the only one, from the time he entered Islam until he became caliph, who played the role of toughness and strength alongside the Messenger (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, until he became the ruler, whereupon his character changed and he became merciful, easygoing and compassionate.⁶⁵

— 10 —

The public *bay'ah* at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was restricted to the people of Madeenah only. Some of the Bedouins and tribes who lived around Madeenah or who were visiting the city may have been present and sworn the oath of allegiance. As for the

⁶⁴ *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah min al-Umam wa al-Jamâ'ât wa al-Afrâd*, by Zaydân, p. 282.

⁶⁵ *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 107.

rest of the regions, they were bound to follow whatever was decided in the City of the Prophet (ﷺ). This did not affect the *bay‘ah* or make it any less legitimate; it would have been impossible to take the oath of allegiance from every single Muslim in the regions, and the state needed a caliph to run its affairs. Moreover the other Muslim regions gave their approval to what happened in Madeenah with regard to the appointment of Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān, whether explicitly or implicitly. No doubt the methods used by the people in the earliest Islamic times reflect the fact that the state and its institutions were still developing.⁶⁶

— 11 —

Women and the oath of allegiance:

During my research I could not find any indication that women gave their oath of allegiance at the time of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. The ancient books on shari‘ah-based politics do not refer to women’s right to give the oath of allegiance or describe it as their duty — as far as I know. It seems that during most eras of Islamic history, *bay‘ah* was restricted to the men only, in exclusion of women. Men did not call on women to be involved, and women did not demand that. Women’s absence from the process of *bay‘ah* was regarded as something natural, to the extent that the scholars who discussed Islamic constitutional rights did not mention women at all. But these historical and fiqhi facts do not alter the *shar‘i* ruling. There is nothing in the Qur’an or Sunnah — which are the main sources of shari‘ah — to suggest that women should not play a role in the *bay‘ah* process alongside men.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee ash-Shari‘ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, p. 260.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 1/277.

— 12 —

Returning Arab female prisoners of war:

The first decision that 'Umar took as ruler was the decision to return the female prisoners captured from the apostates to their tribes. He said: "I would not like the taking of female prisoners to become a custom among the Arabs."⁶⁸

This courageous step made the Arabs feel that they were all equal before the law of Allah, and that no tribe was superior to another, except in terms of how much they strove for the sake of Allah and the services that they offered to Islam and the Muslims. He followed this step with another, namely allowing those former apostates who had repented openly to play a role in the wars against the enemies of Islam. They proved their courage in war and were steadfast in combat, and they demonstrated unmatched loyalty to the state.⁶⁹

— 13 —

The caliphate had become deeply rooted in the hearts of the ummah and become a symbol of Muslim unity and strength. The researcher can see the high capability that the noble *Ṣaḥābah* enjoyed, and the extent of the originality of their work when he realizes that what they established within a few short hours on the same day that the Messenger (ﷺ) died, it took the British conspirators a quarter of a century to destroy, even though the British themselves used to call the caliphate the "sick old man" at that time. What strength this caliphate had, and how deep were its roots; even

⁶⁸ *Al-Khilāfah wa al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon*, p. 160.

⁶⁹ *Jawlah Tāreekhiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon*, by Dr. Muhammad as-Sayyid al-Wakeel, p. 89.

after it had become no more than a symbol with no real power, it still took a full quarter of a century to destroy it, after it had lasted for many centuries.⁷⁰

— 14 —

The difference between a king and a caliph:

'Umar said: "By Allah, I do not know if I am a caliph or a king. If I am a king this is a serious matter." Someone said to him: "There is a difference between them. A caliph does not take anything except rightfully, and he does not give anything except rightfully, and you — praise be to Allah — are like that. A king oppresses the people, taking from one and giving to another." And 'Umar fell silent.⁷¹

According to another report, 'Umar asked Salmân al-Fârisi: "Am I a king or a caliph?" Salmân said: "If you collect from the land a *dirham*, or less or more, and put it where it does not belong, then you are a king and not a caliph." And 'Umar wept.⁷²

1.5. *Shoora*

One of the foundations of the Islamic state is the necessity for the leaders and rulers of the state to consult the Muslims and accept what they are pleased with, so the *shoora* system should be in place. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away

⁷⁰ *Al-Ḥadârah al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. Muhammad 'Âdil, p. 30.

⁷¹ *Ash-Shaykhân Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq wa 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 257.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 256

from about you; so pass over [their faults], and ask [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust [in Him].» (Qur'an 3: 159)

And Allah says:

«And those who answer the Call of their Lord [i.e. to believe that He is the only One Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform *aş-Şalâh* [*Iqâmat aş-Şalâh*], and who [conduct] their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them.» (Qur'an 42: 38)

This verse mentions consultation (*shoora*) among the Muslims alongside establishing prayer, which indicates that the ruling on *shoora* is like the ruling on prayer. The ruling on prayer is that it is obligatory according to shari'ah, and by the same token *shoora* is obligatory according to shari'ah.⁷³ 'Umar adopted the principle of *shoora* in his state; he did not exclude others from the decision-making process or issue any decree concerning public affairs without discussing it with others. If something new came up, he did not take a decision on how to handle it without first gathering the Muslims together and discussing it with them and consulting them.

It was narrated that he said:

"There is nothing good in a decision taken without consultation."⁷⁴

"An individual opinion is like a single thread, two opinions are like two interwoven threads, and three can never be broken."⁷⁵

"Consult regarding your affairs those who fear Allah."⁷⁶

⁷³ *An-Nidhâm as-Siyâsi fee al-Islam* by Abu Fâris, p. 9.

⁷⁴ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 246.

⁷⁵ *Sirâj al-Mamlook* by at-Tarîqoshi, p. 132.

⁷⁶ *Al-Idarah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah* by Sulaymân Âl Kamâl, 1/273.

"Men are of three types: a man who deals with problems according to his own opinion; a man who consults others with regard to matters he is confused about and follows the opinion of those who have wisdom; and a man who is confused and helpless, as he does not consult others and cannot take decisions."⁷⁷

"It is the duty of the Muslims to run their affairs by consultation between them and people of wisdom, as the people should follow those who are in charge of their affairs. So long as they are united then their opinion becomes binding on the people and the people should follow them. Whoever becomes in charge of the Muslims' affairs should follow the opinion of the people of wisdom and whatever they suggest is in the best interests of the Muslims, and whatever plans they draw up in the case of war, the people should follow their opinion."⁷⁸

'Umar used to urge his military commanders to engage in *shoora* (mutual consultation). When he sent Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi to fight the Persians in Iraq, he said to him: "Listen to and obey the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and let them have a say, especially those among them who were present at Badr."⁷⁹

He used to write to his commanders in Iraq, telling them to consult 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and Ṭalḥah al-Asadi concerning their military affairs. He said to them: "Consult Ṭalḥah al-Asadi and 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and seek their help concerning war, but do not give them any control over your affairs, for each person knows his own field best."⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Op. cit.

⁷⁸ *Aṭ-Ṭabari*, 3/481, quoted from *al-Idarah al-'Askariyah*.

⁷⁹ *Murooj adh-Dhahab*, 2/315.

⁸⁰ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubala'*, 1/317.

And he wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (saying): "You should have some among the Arabs of whose sincerity you are certain, because you will not benefit from what a liar tells you, even if he occasionally tells the truth. The traitor is spying against you, not for you."⁸¹

One of the things that 'Urwah said to 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân when he sent him to Baṣrah was: "I have written to al-'Ala' al-Ḥaḍrami⁸², telling him to send 'Arfajah ibn Harthamah⁸³ to you, for he is experienced in warfare and in drawing up plans to defeat the enemy. When he comes to you, consult him and keep him close to you."⁸⁴

The way in which 'Umar put *shoora* into practice was good. He used to consult the common people first and listen to them, then he would gather the elder Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the people of wisdom among them, tell them about the issue and ask them to reach a good conclusion, and whatever they agreed upon, he would carry it out. His actions in this case are similar to those of constitutional regimes in many kingdoms where issues are first discussed in the parliament, for example, then after being agreed upon by the majority, they are referred to a higher council which may be called "senators" or "lords", and once that council has reached its decision, the king executes a decree. The difference between what 'Umar did and what these kingdoms do is that in 'Umar's case it was based on his own *ijtihād*, without there being any system or laws in place.⁸⁵ On many occasions, 'Umar examined an issue, thought about it and expressed his view, then the weakest of people would

⁸¹ *Nihâyat al-Arab*, 6/169.

⁸² *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah*, 1/274,

⁸³ *Al-Iṣâbah*, 2/491.

⁸⁴ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah*, 1/275.

⁸⁵ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 246.

come and explain the correct view, offering evidence for that, and 'Umar would retract his mistaken view and accept the correct view once he became convinced of it.⁸⁶

The issues that required *shoora* became numerous during 'Umar's rule because many new issues arose as Islam spread and reached lands with civilizations, traditions and different systems. New problems were created which required comprehensive *ijtihād*, such as how to deal with conquered lands, how to regulate stipends according to new principles, how war booty collected by the state was to be spent. 'Umar used to assemble the largest number of senior *Ṣaḥābah* he could for *shoora*⁸⁷, and the shaykhs of Badr enjoyed a special status with regard to *shoora* because of their virtue, knowledge and superiority.

But 'Umar started to add younger people to the gatherings too, because he knew that the elders were approaching the end of their lives and would soon go to their Lord and His mercy and forgiveness, and the state needed to renew its manpower. The brilliant 'Umar realized this fact and started to choose from among the youth of the ummah those whom he sensed were knowledgeable and pious. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās was one of the first of them, and 'Umar continued to choose some of the youth of the ummah as advisors based on how much they knew of the Qur'an. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās said: "Those who were well-versed in Qur'an were the members of 'Umar's council and his advisors, whether they were old or young."⁸⁸

Az-Zuhri said to some young people: "Do not think too little of yourselves because you are young, for when 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb

⁸⁶ Op. cit., p. 247.

⁸⁷ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 90.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 147.

was faced with a difficult problem, he would call the young people and seek their advice, relying on the sharpness of their minds.⁸⁹

Muhammad ibn Sireen said: 'Umar used to consult people about matters and he would even consult the women, and if he saw something in a woman's opinion that he thought was good, he would follow it. It is narrated that on one occasion he consulted the Mother of the Believers Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها).⁹⁰

'Umar also had an inner circle from among the *Ṣaḥābah* and people of wisdom and understanding, including al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib and his son 'Abdullāh — who was with him almost constantly, whether he was travelling or not — and 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib⁹¹, Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Zayd ibn Thābit⁹², and others of their caliber whom he used to consult and seek their advice.⁹³ These advisors used to express their views with full freedom and frankness. 'Umar never accused any of them with regard to his character and honesty. 'Umar used to consult them with regard to matters concerning which there was no clear text in the Qur'an and Sunnah, aiming to find out whether one of the *Ṣaḥābah* knew something from the Sunnah concerning it, for some of the *Ṣaḥābah* might have known things that others did not. Similarly he used to seek advice in understanding those texts which might carry more than one meaning, in order to become familiar with all the possible meanings. With regard to these situations (concerning which there was no text), he would sometimes be content to seek the advice of one person or of a few people.

⁸⁹ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 90.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ *As-Sunan al-Kubra* by al-Bayhaqi, 9/29, quoting from *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 90.

⁹² *al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon* by an-Najjār, p. 247.

⁹³ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 90.

With regard to calamities, he would assemble the *Ṣaḥābah* and widen the circle of advisors as much as possible, as he did when the plague struck Syria when he was on his way there.⁹⁴ News of that reached 'Umar when the governors came to meet him in Saragh, which is a place near Syria. The *Muhājireen* and Anṣār were with 'Umar, so he assembled them and asked them whether he should carry on or go back. They differed concerning that. Some said, "You came out seeking the pleasure of Allah and this should not stop you from carrying on." Others said: "It is a trial and death, and we do not think that you should go and meet it." Then he summoned the *Muhājireen* of Quraysh, and they did not differ concerning the matter, rather they advised him to go back. So 'Umar called out to the people: "In the morning we will head back." Abu 'Ubaydah said: "Are you running away from the decree of Allah?" He said: "Yes. We are running away from the decree of Allah to another decree. Do you think that if you have camels and you go to a valley in which there are two areas, one which is green and one which is arid, if you graze your camels in the green area that is by the decree of Allah, and if you graze them in the arid area that is also by the decree of Allah?" 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf heard them and came to them and said: "The Prophet (ﷺ) said: «If you hear that this epidemic is in some land, then do not go there, and if it strikes a land when you are there, do not leave and flee from it.»"⁹⁵

The areas of *shoora* at the time of 'Umar were many and varied, such as the administrative and political fields, such as the selection of agents and governors, military matters, purely *shar'i* issues, such as determining *shar'i* rulings on whether things were *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, and matters pertaining to courts and the passing of

⁹⁴ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 91.

⁹⁵ Muslim, *Kitāb as-Salām*, vol. 4, hadith nos. 1740 and 2219.

judgements.⁹⁶ We will discuss the various fields in which *shoora* was applied, and 'Umar's efforts to find the strongest evidence, in the appropriate places in this book, *in sha' Allâh*. What we would like to emphasize is that the caliphate of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was based on the principle of *shoora* which is derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. The reign of 'Umar was not an isolated case which was something invented solely by him, rather it was one of the principles of the divine system of Islam.

1.6. Justice and equality

One of the aims of Islamic rule is to set out the principles of the Islamic system for the purpose of establishing an Islamic society. Among the most important of these principles are justice and equality. In the speeches which 'Umar gave to the ummah, he affirmed these principles, and his justice and sense of equality were manifested in the speech which he delivered to the ummah on the day when he became caliph. Undoubtedly justice, in 'Umar's mind, meant the justice of Islam, which is the main pillar of Islamic society and Islamic rule. Islam cannot exist in a society where injustice prevails and justice is unknown.

The establishment of justice between people on the individual, social and international levels is not a voluntary matter that depends on the moods or whims and desires of a ruler. Rather the establishment of justice between people is regarded as one of the most sacred and important of duties in Islam. The ummah is unanimously agreed that justice is obligatory.⁹⁷ Al-Fakhr ar-Râzi said:

⁹⁶ *Al-Quyood al-Wâridah 'ala Sulţat ad-Dawlah fee al-Islâm*, Pp. 167, 168.

⁹⁷ *Fiqh at-Tamkeen fee al-Qur'an al-Kareem* by aş-Şalâbi, p. 455.

"They (the scholars) are unanimously agreed that whoever is a ruler (or judge) must rule (or judge) with justice."⁹⁸

This ruling is supported by the texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah. One of the goals of the Islamic state is to establish an Islamic state in which justice and equality prevail and injustice is eliminated and opposed in all its forms. The state should provide opportunities for each person who is seeking his rights to attain them in the quickest and easiest manner possible without that costing him any effort or money. The state should prevent all means that put obstacles in the way of the one who is seeking his rights. This is what 'Umar did in his state. He opened the doors to enable all people to get what is their due and he himself checked on the people's situation, protecting them from oppression and establishing justice between the governors and the people, not caring whether the one against whom judgement was passed was a relative or an enemy, rich or poor. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«O' you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as just witnesses; and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety; and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.»
(Qur'an 5: 8)

'Umar's example of justice captured hearts and minds. In his view, justice was a practical way of calling people to Islam and opening people's hearts to faith. He followed the same method as the Prophet (ﷺ), a way which was based on justice that encompassed all people. His success on the practical level is unprecedented, so much so that his name became synonymous with justice and anyone who learns even a little about his life story can hardly separate the two. There are a number of factors that contributed to this great success, including the following:

⁹⁸ *Tafseer ar-Râzi*, 10/141.

— 1 —

His caliphate lasted longer than that of Abu Bakr. 'Umar's caliphate lasted for ten years whereas Abu Bakr's lasted only two years and a few months.

— 2 —

He adhered firmly to the truth, to such an extent that he was stricter with himself and his own family than with the people, as we shall see.

— 3 —

The concept of meeting Allah was deeply rooted in his mind, to such an extent that in all that he did, he sought the pleasure of Allah before the pleasure of the people, and he feared Allah but he did not fear anyone among the people.

— 4 —

The authority of shari'ah held sway in the hearts of the *Ṣaḥābah* and *Tābi'een*, so that 'Umar's actions met with strong support and a great deal of cooperation from everyone.⁹⁹

— 5 —

There are some examples of his attitude in establishing justice and fairness among the people:

⁹⁹ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Ḥamad Muhammad aṣ-Ṣamad, p. 145.

He ruled in favour of a Jewish man against a Muslim; the fact that the Jew was a *kāfir* did not cause him to be unjust towards him or to be biased against him. Imam Mâlik¹⁰⁰ narrated from Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib that a Jew and a Muslim referred their dispute to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ). 'Umar saw that the Jew was in the right and he ruled in his favour. The Jew said to him: "By Allah you have ruled aright."¹⁰¹

'Umar (ؓ) used to command his agents to come and meet him on certain occasions, and when they had gathered he would say: "O' people, I do not send my agents to you to beat you or to take your money, rather I send them to protect you against any injustice and to divide the war booty among you. If anyone has had anything else done to him, let him stand up." No one stood up except one man who stood up and said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, your agent gave me one hundred lashes." He asked, "What did you beat him for? Get up and settle the score." 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ stood up and said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, if you do that, things will go out of control and it will set a precedent that people will follow after you." He asked, "Should I not establish justice when the Messenger of Allah allowed people to settle scores with him?" He said: "Then let us make a deal with him." He said: "Here he is, work it out with him." So they compensated him by giving him two hundred *dinārs*, two *dinārs* for each blow of the whip.¹⁰² If they had not made this deal, 'Umar would have allowed the man to settle the score.

A man from Egypt came to complain about the son of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, who was 'Umar's governor in Egypt. He said: "O' Commander of the Faithful, here is a man running to you from

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Wasāṭiyah fee al-Qur'an al-Kareem* by aṣ-Ṣalābi, p. 96.

¹⁰¹ *Al-Muwatta'*, *Kitāb al-Aqḍiyah*, *Bāb at-Targheeb fee al-Qaḍā' bi'l-Haqq*, no. 2.

¹⁰² *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/293-294.

oppression." He said, "I will offer you protection." He said, "I raced with the son of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ and beat him, and he started hitting me with a whip and saying, 'I am the son of noble people.'" 'Umar wrote to 'Amr (ؓ), telling him to come (to Madeenah) and bring his son with him. 'Amr came and 'Umar said, "Where is the Egyptian? Take the whip and hit him." So he started hitting him with the whip, and 'Umar was saying, "Hit the son of noble people!" Anas said He hit him, and by Allah we liked that hitting, and he did not stop until we thought that it was enough. Then 'Umar said to the Egyptian, "Hit the bald head of 'Amr." He said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, his son is the one who hit me, and I am satisfied. 'Umar said to 'Amr, "Since when did you enslave people whose mothers bore them free?" He said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, I did not know about (this incident) and he did not come to me."¹⁰³

The state of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was based on the principle of justice. How well Ibn Taymiyah put it when he said: "Allah causes the just state to prevail even if it is a *kāfir* state, and He does not allow an unjust state to prevail, even if it is Muslim... and by means of justice the best in men is brought out and wealth increases."¹⁰⁴

The principle of equality was also established by 'Umar in his state. It is regarded as one of the basic principles that are affirmed by Islam. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿O' mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that [believer] who has *at-Taḡwa* [i.e. he is one of the *Muttaqoon* [the pious¹⁰⁵]]. Verily,

¹⁰³ *Wasatīyah Ahl as-Sunnah bayna al-Firaq* by Muhammad Bākareem, p. 170. [page 128 note 3]

¹⁰⁴ *As-Siyāsah ash-Shar'iyah*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ See (*Qur'an* 2: 2).

Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴾

(*Qur'an* 49: 13)

In the Islamic view, all people are equal, rulers and subjects, men and women, Arabs and non-Arabs, white and black. Islam has abolished all differences among people based on race, colour, lineage and class. Rulers and subjects are all equal according to shari'ah.¹⁰⁶ 'Umar's implementation of this principle offers the best testimony of that. There follow some stories which highlight the principle of equality in his state.

During 'Umar's reign a famine struck Madeenah and its environs. When the wind blew, sand would come down from the sky like ashes¹⁰⁷, hence that year became known as 'Ām ar-Ramādah (the Year of Ashes). 'Umar swore that he would not eat ghee, yogurt or milk until all the people could afford to have these things. Then some ghee and yogurt reached the marketplace and a slave bought them for 'Umar for forty (*dirhams*). He came to 'Umar and said: "O' Commander of the Faithful, Allah has fulfilled your oath and made your reward great. Some ghee and yogurt came to the marketplace and I bought them for you for forty (*dirhams*)." 'Umar said, "You paid too much for them. Give them in charity, for I do not like to eat in an extravagant manner." And 'Umar said, "How can I be concerned for the people if I do not suffer what they suffer?"¹⁰⁸ This was 'Umar's attitude during the year of famine which was known as the Year of Ashes, and his attitude did not change when things became expensive. When the price of ghee grew high, 'Umar ate olive oil and his stomach rumbled. He said: "Rumble as much as you like, for by Allah you will not eat ghee until the people eat it."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ *Fiqh at-Tamkeen fee al-Qur'an al-Kareem*, p. 501.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/98, quoting from *Nidhām al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/87.

¹⁰⁹ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 101.

In the view of the early caliphs, the principle of equality was not limited only to dealing with people in the same way, rather it also extended to specific social matters such as the relationship between servant and master. It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbâs said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb came for Ḥajj, and Safwân ibn Umayyah made food for him. They brought a vessel that was carried by four men. The food was placed before the people for them to eat, and the servants remained standing. 'Umar said: "Don't you want them to eat with you?" Sufiyân ibn 'Abdullâh said: "No, by Allah, O' Commander of the Faithful. We want to keep this food for ourselves." 'Umar became very angry and said: "Who are these people who give themselves precedence over their servants? May Allah punish them!" Then he said to the servants: "Sit down and eat." So the servants sat down and ate, and 'Umar did not eat.¹¹⁰

Similarly, 'Umar would not eat of food that was not available to all the Muslims, and he used to fast all the time. At the time of the famine, when evening came he would eat bread that had been soaked in oil, until one day some people slaughtered a camel.¹¹¹ They gave its meat to the people, and they took the best parts of it — the hump and the liver — and brought that to him. He said: "Where did you get this?" They said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, it is from a camel that we slaughtered today." He said, "Oh no, oh no, what a bad ruler I am if I eat from the best of it and the people eat from the worst of it. Take this away and bring some other food." Some bread and olive oil were brought to him, and he started breaking the bread with his own hands and soaking it in the oil.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Op. cit.

¹¹¹ *Nidhâm al-Ḥukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 1/87.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 188.

'Umar did not apply this principle of equality in Madeenah only, rather he taught it to his agents and governors in other regions, even with regard to matters of food and drink.¹¹³ When 'Utbah ibn Farqad went to Azerbaijan, some *khabees* was brought to him and when he ate it, he found that it was sweet and good. He said: "By Allah, I will make something like that for the Commander of the Faithful." So he made two huge trays of it for him and sent them on a camel, accompanied by two men, to 'Umar. When they came to 'Umar he opened them and asked: "What is this?" They said, "*Khabees*." He tasted it and found it was sweet. He said: "Can all the Muslims afford to have this in their homes?" He said: "No." He said: "Then take it back." Then he wrote to him, saying: "It is not by the efforts of your father or mother (that you are living this life). Make sure that the Muslims are eating the same kind of food as you have in your own home."¹¹⁴

Another way in which 'Umar put the principle of equality into practice was when some wealth came to him and he started sharing it out among the people, and they crowded around him. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs came, pushing and shoving until he reached 'Umar, who struck him with a stick and said: "You have come showing no respect to the authority of Allah on earth (i.e., the caliph), and I would like to teach you that the authority of Allah has no respect for you."¹¹⁵ If we remember that Sa'd was one of the ten who were given glad tidings of Paradise and that he was the conqueror of Iraq and the capital of Chosroes, and one of the six who were appointed by 'Umar for *shoora* (when he was stabbed), and that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was pleased with him, and that he was known as the Knight of Islam, we will realize how committed 'Umar was to

¹¹³ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 188.

¹¹⁴ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 147.

¹¹⁵ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, p. 243.

implementing the principle of equality.¹¹⁶

Ibn al-Jawzi narrated that 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ carried out the punishment for wine-drinking on 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb when he was his governor in Egypt. Such punishments were usually carried out in the public square of the city, so as to teach a lesson to the masses, but 'Amr carried out the punishment on the son of the caliph in his house. When news of that reached 'Umar, he wrote to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ saying: "From the slave of Allah 'Umar the Commander of the Faithful to the sinner (*al-āṣī*) Ibn al-Āṣ. I am amazed at you, O' son of al-Āṣ and your audacity towards me in doing something other than what I told you to do. I gave you precedence over the people of Badr who are better than you, and I chose you so that you would do what I tell you to do. But you have betrayed me and sunk to this low level. I think that the only thing I can do is to dismiss you in the most humiliating manner. You beat 'Abdur-Raḥmān in your house, and you know that this is against my instructions. 'Abdur-Raḥmān is just one of your people, so do with him what you would do with any other Muslim. But probably you thought that he is the son of the caliph, when you know that I accept no compromise for any of the people when it comes to carrying out the *ḥadd* punishments prescribed by Allah. When this letter of mine reaches you, send him wearing a cloak on a mount so that he will realize how bad his action was."¹¹⁷ He was brought to Madeenah and the *ḥadd* punishment was carried out publicly. This was narrated by Ibn Sa'd and referred to by Ibn az-Zubayr, and it was narrated by 'Abdur-Razzāq in a lengthy report with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Ibn 'Umar.¹¹⁸ Here we can see equality before shari'ah in the clearest

¹¹⁶ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/88.

¹¹⁷ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 235.

¹¹⁸ *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah wa ad-Dawlah al-Umawiyah* by Yahya al-Yahya, p. 345.

way. The accused was the son of the caliph, but the governor did not exempt him from punishment. However 'Umar noticed that his son enjoyed some special treatment, which upset him greatly, so he punished his governor — the conqueror of Egypt — severely and carried out on his son the punishment that he deserved, out of keenness to carry out the *ḥadd* punishment prescribed by Allah and to discipline his son and straighten him out. If this was the way in which he dealt with the closest of people to him, how do you think he dealt with others?¹¹⁹

Another of the historical examples which authors quote as proof of 'Umar's uncompromising application of the principle of equality is the story of what 'Umar did with Jabalah ibn al-Ayham. Jabalah was the last of the leaders of Ghassân who had been appointed by Heraclius. The tribes of Ghassân lived in Syria under Byzantine rule, and the Byzantines used to incite them continually to attack Arabia, especially after the emergence of Islam. When the Islamic conquests spread and the Muslims won one victory after another against the Byzantines, the Arab tribes in Syria started to declare their Islam and the Ghassanid leader decided that he would enter Islam too. So he became Muslim and his people became Muslim with him. He wrote to 'Umar, asking him for permission to come to Madeenah, and 'Umar rejoiced at his becoming Muslim and his impending visit. So he came to Madeenah and stayed there for a while, and 'Umar welcomed him and took care of him.

Then he decided to go for Ḥajj, and whilst he was circumambulating the Ka'bah, a man from Banu Fazârah stepped on his *izâr* and it fell off. The Ghassanid leader — who was still new in Islam — became angry and struck the man harshly, breaking his nose. The Fazâri man hastened to the caliph to complain to him about

¹¹⁹ *Fann al-Ḥukm fee al-Islâm*, by Dr. Muṣṭafā Abu Zayd, Pp. 475, 476.

what had happened to him. 'Umar sent for Jabalah and asked him about the incident, and he confirmed (what the Fazâri man had said). 'Umar said to him: "What made you wrong your brother and break his nose?" He replied: "You are being too kind to this Bedouin. Were it not for the sanctity of the House I would have chopped off his head." 'Umar said: "You have admitted it. Either you will settle the matter with the man or I will carry out *qaṣâṣ* against you." Jabalah ibn al-Ayham was astounded by what was happening and he said: "How can this be when he is a commoner and I am a king?"

'Umar said: "Islam has made you equal."

The Ghassanid leader said: "I had thought, O' Commander of the Faithful, that I would be in a better position in Islam than I was in the *Jâhiliyah*."

'Umar said: "Stop arguing. If you do not settle matters with this man, I will carry out *qaṣâṣ* against you."

Jabalah said: "Then I will become a Christian."

'Umar said: "If you become a Christian I will strike your neck (cut off your head), because you have become Muslim, and if you apostatize I will execute you."¹²⁰

At that point Jabalah realized that that was no point in arguing and that arguing with 'Umar was to no avail. So he asked him to give him time to think about the matter, and 'Umar gave him permission to leave. Jabalah thought about it and reached a decision which was not a good one. He preferred to leave Makkah, with his people, under cover of darkness, and flee to Constantinople, and he arrived there as a Christian. He later regretted this decision deeply, and mentioned that in verses of poetry which are still extant.

In this story we see 'Umar's keenness for the principle of equality

¹²⁰ *Ibn Khaldoun*, 2/281, quoting from *Nidhâm al-Hukm* by al-Qâsimi, 1/90.

before shari'ah. Islam had made the king and the commoner equal, and this equality had to become something that was implemented in real life and not just words written on a page or an empty slogan recited on people's lips.¹²¹

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) put into effect the principle of equality that had been brought by the shari'ah (Islamic law) of the Lord of the Worlds, and made it a living reality that was experienced by the people. That was not affected by paternal bonds, noble titles or differences in religion, nor did he try to appease conquering warriors. This great principle became a living reality that was felt by rulers and subjects alike, and those who were wronged and oppressed benefited from it.¹²² The application of the principle of equality had an effect on society at the time of the four caliphs, which was manifested in the souls of that generation, who shunned traditional tribalism and claims to superiority and leadership on the basis of lineage. Differences based on lineage were eliminated, no man of noble birth thought he could take advantage of a man of lowly birth and no weak man despaired of claiming his rights. All were equal in rights and duties. The principle of equality in the society at the time of the four caliphs was a new light which Islam spread throughout the Muslim society and this principle played a strong role in the formation of that society.¹²³

1.7. Freedom

The principle of freedom is one of the basic principles on which the rule of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was based. This

¹²¹ *Fann al-Hukm fee al-Islām*, Pp. 477, 478.

¹²² *Ibid*, p. 478.

¹²³ *Al-Mujtama' al-Islāmi Da'ā'imuhu wa Adābuhu* by Dr. Muhammad Abu 'Ajwah, p. 165.

principle implies the preservation of public freedom for all people within the limits set out by shari'ah and in such a way that it does not contradict shari'ah. The Islamic call for the freedom of all people was a far-reaching call, the like of which is seldom found in history. The first call that was made in this field was the call made in many verses, inviting people to affirm the Oneness of Allah and to devote their worship to Him alone, to the exclusion of any other beings or creatures. This call to *Tawh  ed* encompasses all the meanings of freedom and independence for mankind. Sometimes it is manifested in positive actions, such as enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and sometimes it is manifested in negative actions, such as refraining from forcing people to enter Islam. In many cases this meaning is combined with those of mercy, justice, *shoora* and equality, because none of these principles which are advocated by Islam can be established and be implemented except by means of freedom.

At the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in particular, the principle of freedom effectively contributed to the spread of Islam, making it easy for the Muslims to conquer other lands and expand the boundaries of their state, because Islam honoured man and guaranteed his freedom in the broadest sense. In contrast, the other political systems that were prevalent at that time, in the Byzantine and Persian states, were oppressive totalitarian regimes under which the people, especially political opponents and religious minorities, suffered the worst type of persecution and oppression. For example, the Byzantine state tried to force those who followed the Jacobite teachings, especially in Egypt and Syria, to follow the Melchite teachings (the official religion). Dissidents were frequently seized and burned alive. The tyrants forced them to believe in what had been approved by the Macedonian council; otherwise they would be placed in sacks full of sand and thrown into the depths of the sea.

Similarly the Persian state, at various times in its history, persecuted the followers of divinely-revealed religions, especially Christians, after fighting between Persia and Byzantium intensified. But in Islam at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the kind of freedom which is known nowadays was known and was protected.¹²⁴ There follow some examples of freedom at the time of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه).

1.7.1. Freedom of religious belief

Islam does not force anyone to accept it, rather it calls them to study and ponder the creation of Allah and this religion. And it commands its followers to debate with people in the way that is better. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«There is no compulsion in religion...» (Qur'an 2: 256)

«But if they turn away [O' Muhammad from the Islamic Monotheism, which you have brought to them]. We have not sent you [O' Muhammad] as a *Hafeedh* [watcher, protector] over them [i.e. to take care of their deeds and to recompense them]. Your duty is to convey [the Message]...» (Qur'an 42: 48)

«Invite [mankind, O' Muhammad] to the way of your Lord [i.e. Islam] with wisdom [i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'an] and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided.» (Qur'an 16: 125)

«And argue not with the people of the Scripture [Jews and Christians], unless it be in [a way] that is better [with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His

¹²⁴ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Ḥamad aṣ-Ṣamad, Pp. 157, 158.

Verses], except with such of them as do wrong; and say [to them], 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our *Ilâh* [God] and your *Ilâh* [God] is One [i.e. Allah], and to Him we have submitted [as Muslims].'» (*Qur'an* 29: 46)

And there are many similar verses. Hence we find that in his state, 'Umar was keen to protect religious freedom. We may note that in this matter 'Umar was following the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the first Rightly-Guided Caliph Abu Bakr. He allowed the People of the Book to practise their religion, he took the *jizyah* from them and he drew up treaties with them as will be discussed below. Their places of worship were not destroyed, rather they were left alone, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

«... For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely, have been pulled down...» (*Qur'an* 22: 40)

The conquests which took place at the time of 'Umar, carried out by the *Ṣaḥābah*, bear witness to the respect that Islam showed to other religions and the keenness of the Islamic leadership to avoid forcing anyone to enter Islam. One day an old Christian woman came to 'Umar himself concerning some need of hers. He said to her: "Become Muslim and you will be safe, for Allah sent Muhammad with the truth." She said, "I am an old woman and death is very close to me." So he dealt with her need, but he was worried that what he had done might imply some exploitation of her need in an attempt to force her to become Muslim. So he prayed to Allah for forgiveness for what he had done, and said, "O' Allah, I was trying to guide her, not trying to force her."¹²⁵

¹²⁵ *Mu'āmalah Ghayr al-Muslimeen fee al-Mujtama' al-Islāmi* by Edward Ghali, p. 41.

'Umar had a Christian slave whose name was Ashaqq. He said: "I was a Christian slave belonging to 'Umar." He ('Umar) said: "Become Muslim so that we may benefit from your help with regard to some of the Muslims' affairs, because we should not seek help in dealing with their affairs from someone who is not one of them." But I refused, and he said, «There is no compulsion in religion» (*Qur'an* 2: 256). When 'Umar was dying, he set me free and said, "Go wherever you want."¹²⁶

The People of the Book used to practise their religious rituals and perform their acts of worship in their places of worship and their houses, and no one prevented them from doing that, because Islamic shari'ah gives them the right to freedom of belief. Aṭ-Ṭabari tells us of the treaty which 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) drew up with the people of Aelia' (Jerusalem), in which he stated that he was giving security to the people of Aelia' and that their lives, wealth, crosses and churches would be protected.¹²⁷

'Umar's governor in Egypt, 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, drew up a treaty with the people of Egypt in which it said: "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is what 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ gives to the people of Egypt of security, protecting their lives, their religion, their wealth, their churches, their crosses, their land and their sea." He confirmed this treaty by saying: "The one who signs it is bound before Allah and is under the protection of His Messenger, the caliph and the believers."¹²⁸

The *fuqaha*¹²⁹ are unanimously agreed that *ahl adh-dhimmah* have the right to perform their religious rituals and that they should

¹²⁶ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/58.

¹²⁷ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/158.

¹²⁸ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/98.

¹²⁹ *As-Sultāh at-Tanfeedhiyah* by Dr. Muhammad ad-Dahlawi, 2/725.

not be prevented from doing that unless they do it openly. If they want to practise their religious rituals openly and in public, such as bringing out their crosses, then the Muslims think that they should not be allowed to do that in the Muslim regions, but they should not be prevented from doing that in their own towns and villages.¹³⁰

Shaykh al-Ghazâlî says concerning Islam's guarantee of freedom of belief that the religious freedom which Islam guarantees to people is something the like of which was not known on any of the five continents. It never happened that one religion gained all power and gave other religions all the means of surviving and flourishing, as Islam did.¹³¹

'Umar was keen to implement the principle of religious freedom in society and he summed up his policy towards the Jews and Christians by saying: "We gave them a treaty stating that we would leave them alone with regard to their churches, to say whatever they want in them, and that we would not burden them with more than they can bear, and that if their enemies want to harm them we will fight to defend them, and that we will not interfere between them and their (religious) rulings except if they come to us, asking us to judge on the basis of our rulings; and that if they keep their affairs to themselves, we will not bother them."¹³²

It was proven that 'Umar was very tolerant towards *ahl adh-dhimmah*, to such an extent that he would let them off paying the *jizyah* if they were unable to do so. In *Kitâb al-Amwâl*, Abu 'Ubayd states that 'Umar passed by the door of some people and saw there an old blind man who was begging. He tapped him on the shoulder and

¹³⁰ Op. cit.

¹³¹ *Huqooq al-Insân bayna Ta'âleem al-Islâm wa ai'lân al-Umam al-Muttaḥidah*, p. 111.

¹³² *Nidhâm al-Ḥukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 117.

said: "From which of the people of the Book are you?" He said: "(I am) a Jew." He said: "What forced you to do what I see (i.e., begging)?" He said: "I am begging because of the *jizyah* and needs of the old age." 'Umar took him by the hand and took him to his house, where he gave him something from his house. Then he sent for the keeper of the *bayt al-mâl* and said: "Check him and others like him, for by Allah we have not been fair to him if we benefited from him (from his *jizyah*) when he was young and abandon him when he is old." And he let him and others like him off from paying the *jizyah*.¹³³ And he wrote to his agents issuing this command to all of them.¹³⁴

These actions point to the justice of Islam and 'Umar's keenness to establish his state on a basis of justice and kindness to its people, even if they were not Muslim. Religious freedom remained a prominent feature of the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, guaranteed by the state and protected by the rulings of shari'ah.

1.7.2. Freedom of movement

'Umar was very keen to allow this freedom, but he limited it in some exceptional cases as dictated by need. Those exceptional cases, in which he limited the freedom of movement and freedom to choose where one would live, were very few. It is sufficient for us to refer to two of them because of their importance:

1. 'Umar kept the senior *Ṣaḥābah* in Madeenah and did not allow them to go to the conquered lands except with his permission or for some official purpose, such as when he appointed some of them as his governors or leaders of his armies. He did that so that he would be

¹³³ *Al-Amwâl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 57; *Aḥkâm Ahl adh-Dhimma* by Ibn al-Qayyim, 1/38.

¹³⁴ *Naṣab ar-Râyah* by az-Zayla'i, 7/453.

able to consult them and refer to them concerning problems that he came across in ruling. At the same time, this prevented any *fitnah* (tribulation) or division arising among the Muslims which might have happened if the *Ṣaḥābah* had gone out to the other regions and settled there.¹³⁵ Based on his political wisdom and his precise understanding of human nature and psychology, he kept the senior *Ṣaḥābah* in Madeenah, and said: "What I fear the most for this ummah is your spreading out into other lands."¹³⁶ He believed that if he was lenient in this matter, that would result in tribulation in the conquered lands, as the people would rally around the prominent personalities and there would be a lot of confusion about them. There would be many leaders and figureheads, and chaos would ensue.¹³⁷ 'Umar feared the prospect of having multiple centres of political and religious power within the Islamic state, wherein each *Ṣaḥābi* might acquire an aura of respect through which his opinion would reach the level of a decree issued by the public authorities. So in order to prevent the development of multiple centres of power and the fragmentation of the state's authority, 'Umar thought that he should keep the senior *Ṣaḥābah* in Madeenah, where they could take part in decision-making and avoid the chaos of individual *ijtihād*. Were it not for this *shar'ī* basis, the decisions issued by 'Umar would have been to no avail and they would not have been binding, because they would lack any *shar'ī* basis of justification, because the disposal of the ummah's affairs should be connected to its interests.¹³⁸

2. The second case arose when 'Umar commanded that the Christians of Najrân and the Jews of Khaybar be expelled from the Arabian heartland to Iraq and Syria. The reason for that was that the Jews of

¹³⁵ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 160.

¹³⁶ *Al-Murtaḍi Seerat Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Abu al-Ḥasan an-Nadawi, p. 109.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Al-Quyood al-Wāridah 'ala Sulṭat ad-Dawlah*, p. 151.

Khaybar and the Christians of Najrân did not adhere to the conditions of the treaties that they had agreed with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and renewed with Abu Bakr. The fortresses of the Jews of Khaybar and the Christians of Najrân had become centres of plotting and conspiracy, so 'Umar had no choice but to remove these devilish strongholds and weaken their power. The rest of the Jews and Christians continued to live as individuals in the society of Madeenah, enjoying all their rights. Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his *Sunan* and 'Abdur-Razzâq ibn Hamâm aṣ-Ṣan'âni narrated in his *Muṣannaf* from Ibn al-Musayyib and Ibn Shihâb that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“No two religions should co-exist in the Arabian Peninsula.”» Mâlik said that Ibn Shihâb said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb examined the matter until he found the answer in a report narrated from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who said: «“No two religions should co-exist in the Arabian Peninsula.”» So he expelled the Jews of Khaybar. Mâlik said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) expelled the Jews of Najrân and Fadak.¹³⁹

For the *Ṣaḥâbah*, the Prophethood of the Prophet (ﷺ) was something definite. But neither the Jews nor the Christians of Najrân could adhere to their treaties with the Muslims because of the severity of their enmity, hatred and envy of Islam and the Muslims. The reason why the Jews of Khaybar were expelled was narrated by Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) who said: “When the people of Khaybar attacked 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar, 'Umar stood up and addressed (the people) and said, ‘The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) made a deal with the Jews of Khaybar, allowing them to keep their wealth. He said, ‘We leave (this land) to you so long as Allah wills.’ 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar went out to his property there and was attacked at night, and his arms and legs were dislocated. We have no other enemies there; they are our enemies and

¹³⁹ *As-Sunan al-Kubra* by al-Bayhaqi, 9/208; *Muṣannaf 'Abdur-Razzâq*, 6/53.

we are accusing them, and I am thinking of expelling them.' When 'Umar resolved to do that, someone from Banu al-Haqeeq came to him and said, 'O' Commander of the Faithful, will you expel us when Muhammad (ﷺ) let us stay and made a deal with us with regard to the land there, and stipulated conditions for that?' 'Umar said, 'Do you think that I have forgotten what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'What about when you are expelled from Khaybar, riding your strong camel, night after night'?' He said, 'That was a joke on the part of Abu al-Qâsim.' He ('Umar) said, 'You are lying, O' enemy of Allah.' So 'Umar expelled them, and gave them the price of the fruits they had there in money and camels and other goods such as saddles and ropes and so on.¹⁴⁰ The Jews had betrayed and broken the treaty, so it was natural that they should be expelled from the Arabian Peninsula, in fulfillment of the instructions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). So 'Umar expelled them to Tayma' and Jericho.

As for the Christians of Najrân, they did not adhere to the terms of their treaty which they had agreed with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and renewed with Abu Bakr. They broke some of those terms and consumed *riba* and dealt in it, so 'Umar expelled them from Najrân to Iraq and wrote to them, saying: "If any of these people come to the governors of Syria or Iraq, let him give them barren land. Whatever they produce is theirs for the sake of Allah, and is the produce of their land." So they came to Iraq and settled in al-Najrâniyah, which is a village near Koofah.¹⁴¹ Abu Yoosuf narrated that 'Umar was worried that the Christians might try to harm the Muslims.¹⁴² Hence 'Umar's way of thinking becomes clear, as he expelled them after other reasons emerged in addition to the instructions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). We can clearly see

¹⁴⁰ Bukhari, *Kitâb ash-Shuroot*, hadith no. 2730.

¹⁴¹ *Al-Amwâl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 245.

¹⁴² *Al-Khirâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 79.

'Umar's insight in directing these heavy blows against the strongholds of the Jews in Khaybar and the Christians in Najrân, after he found the justification he needed to expel them from the Arabian Peninsula without being unjust or unfair. Hence he prevented the centres of plotting from having the opportunity to set out plans to destroy the Islamic state.

1.7.3. The right to security, the sanctity of the home, and freedom of ownership

Islam affirms the right to security in many verses of the Qur'an and *ahâdeeth* of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... Let there be no transgression except against *adh-Dhâlimoon* [the polytheists, and wrong-doers].﴾ (Qur'an 2: 193)

﴿... Whoever transgresses the prohibition against you, you transgress likewise against him...﴾ (Qur'an 2: 194)

Islam also affirms the right to life, which is broader in scope than the right to security, because the latter refers to a negative action on the part of the state, namely refraining from any aggressive or threatening act, whereas the right to life includes, on top of that, a positive action, namely protection of people and their blood from any aggression or threat, and making this protection a common responsibility which is to be shouldered by all the people, because unlawful aggression against one of them is like aggression against all of them.¹⁴³ Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Because of that, We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or [and] to spread mischief in the land — it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if

¹⁴³ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd ar-Râshideen*, p. 163.

anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind...» (Qur'an 5: 32)

On the basis of the words of the Qur'an and the actions of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'Umar during his caliphate guaranteed the individual's right to security and to life, and he strove hard to maintain these rights and protect them against any mischief. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to say: "I have not appointed my governors over you to whip you, slander your honour and seize your wealth, rather I have appointed them to teach you the Book of your Lord and the Sunnah of your Prophet. Whoever is wronged by his governor, let him refer the matter to me so that I may settle it."¹⁴⁴

It was also narrated that 'Umar said: "There can be no certainty that a man will not confess (to a crime) if he is starved, frightened and detained."¹⁴⁵ These words of 'Umar's indicate that it is not permissible to obtain a confession from a suspect under pressure or by means of threats, whether the means used are physical, such as depriving him of his stipend or confiscating his wealth, or psychological, such as resorting to threats and scaring him with all kinds of punishment.

With regard to the sanctity of the home, Allah has forbidden us to enter houses or dwellings without the agreement of their occupants or in a manner other than those which are customary. Allah (ﷻ) says concerning this matter:

«O' you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and greeted those in them; that is better for you, in order that you may remember. And if you find no one therein, still, enter not until permission has been given. And if you are

¹⁴⁴ Op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 165.

asked to go back, go back, for it is purer for you...»

(Qur'an 24: 27-28)

And He also says:

«... Enter houses through their proper doors...» (Qur'an 2: 189)

And:

«... And spy not...» (Qur'an 49: 12)

The sanctity of the home was guaranteed and protected at the time of 'Umar (ؓ) and the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.¹⁴⁶

Freedom of ownership was also guaranteed and protected at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, to the fullest extent affirmed by Islamic shari'ah. When 'Umar found himself compelled, for political and strategic reasons, to expel the Christians of Najrân and the Jews of Khaybar from the heart of the Arabian Peninsula to Iraq and Syria, he ordered that they be given land that was like their old land, in the places to which they were moved, out of respect for and in affirmation of the right to individual ownership which is guaranteed by Islam to *ahl adh-dhimma* just as it is guaranteed to the Muslims.¹⁴⁷

When 'Umar found himself compelled to take possession of some houses in order to expand *al-Masjid al-Ḥarâm* in Makkah, the fair compensation that he gave to their owners was no less than an acknowledgement on his part of the individual right of possession, which means that it is not permissible to confiscate property even in cases of necessity without first giving fair compensation to the owners.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd ar-Râshideen*, p. 168.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 189.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 190.

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, freedom of ownership did not exist in an absolute sense, rather it was limited by the rules of shari'ah and the common interest. It was narrated that Bilâl ibn al-Hârith al-Muzani came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and asked him to allocate some land to him, and he gave him a vast area of land. When the caliphate passed to 'Umar, he said to him: "O' Bilâl, you asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to allocate a vast piece of land to you, and he gave it to you, because the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) could not refuse anyone who asked him for something. But you do not have the means to make full use of what you have in your possession." He said, "Yes (that is so)." 'Umar said, "So look at what you are able to make good use of, and keep it, and what you cannot make full use of, give it to us so that we may share it out among the Muslims." He said, "By Allah, I will not do that, because it was given to me by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." 'Umar said, "By Allah, you will certainly do it." And 'Umar took that which he was not able to make good use of and shared it out among the Muslims.¹⁴⁹

This indicates that individual ownership is strongly connected to the public interest. If the owner is able to look after the property and take good care of it as a trustee, then no one has the right to dispute his ownership. But if that is not the case, then the ruler has the right to intervene in the event of negligence.¹⁵⁰

1.7.4. Freedom of opinion

Islam fully guarantees the individual the freedom of opinion, and this right was guaranteed and protected during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. 'Umar used to leave the people to express

¹⁴⁹ *Al-Mughni*, 5/579, *Nidhâm al-Arḍ*, Muhammad Abu Yahya, p. 207.

¹⁵⁰ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Ḥamad aṣ-Ṣamad, p. 192.

their opinions and he gave the opportunity to reach their own conclusions in matters concerning which there was no text.

It was narrated that 'Umar met a man and said: "What did you do?" He said, "Ali and Zayd passed such and such a judgement." He said, "If it were me, I would have ruled in such and such a manner." He said, "What kept you from doing that when you are the ruler?" He said, "If there was clear evidence concerning your issue in the Book of Allah or in the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ), I would have overridden their judgement, but my judgement is based on my personal opinion, and everyone has the right to express his own opinion."¹⁵¹

Similarly, 'Umar let the *Ṣaḥābah* express their own opinions concerning matters that are subject to *ijtihād*, and he did not prevent them from reaching their own conclusions or force them to follow a specific view. Criticizing and advising the ruler, at the time of 'Umar and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, was something that was open to all.

'Umar stood up and delivered a speech in which he said: "O people, whoever among you sees any crookedness in me, let him straighten it." A man stood up and said: "By Allah, if we see any crookedness in you, we will straighten it with our swords." 'Umar said: "Praise be to Allah Who has put in this ummah people who will straighten the crookedness of 'Umar with their swords."¹⁵²

It is narrated that 'Umar said, in the speech he gave when he assumed the position of caliph: "Help me against (the evil of) myself by enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and by offering me advice."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/65.

¹⁵² *Akhbār 'Umar*, Pp. 331, 332, quoting from *ar-Riyād an-Nadrah*.

¹⁵³ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen*, p. 197.

'Umar regarded the practice of constructive political freedom (sincere advice) as obligatory upon the people, and as a right to which the ruler was entitled, as he said: "O' people, we have rights over you: sincerity towards us in our absence and help in doing good."¹⁵⁴

And he believed that any individual member of the ummah had the right to watch him and straighten any crookedness, even if that was done by the sword, if he deviated from the right path. He said: "O' people, whoever among you sees any crookedness in me, let him straighten it."¹⁵⁵ And he used to say: "The most beloved of people to me is the one who points out my faults."¹⁵⁶

And he said: "I fear that I may make a mistake and no one among you will correct me out of respect for me."¹⁵⁷

One day a man came to him and said to him — in the presence of witnesses — "Fear Allah, O' 'Umar!" Some of those present became angry and wanted to silence him, but 'Umar said to them: "There is no goodness in you if you do not say it and there is no goodness in us if we do not listen."¹⁵⁸

One day he stood and addressed the people, and hardly had he said: "O' people, listen and obey," but one of them interrupted him and said, "We will not listen and obey, O' 'Umar." 'Umar calmly asked, "Why not, O' slave of Allah?" He said, "Because each one of us has been given a single shirt from the fabric to cover his 'awrah." 'Umar said to him, "Wait a minute." Then he called his son 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar, and 'Abdullâh explained to him that he had

¹⁵⁴ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 197.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 198; *ash-Shaykhân Abu Bakr wa 'Umar min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 231.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 198.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 200.

given his father his own share of the fabric to make his garment complete, and the *Ṣaḥābah* were convinced by that. A man said, with humility and respect: "Now we will listen and obey, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*."¹⁵⁹

One day he delivered a *khuṭbah* and said: "Do not give more than forty *uqiyahs* in dowries to women, even if she is the daughter of Dhu al-Qiṣṣah — i.e., Yazeed ibn al-Ḥuṣayn. Whoever gives more than that, I will seize the extra amount and put it in the *bayt al-māl*." A woman objected to that and said, "You do not have the right to do that!" He asked, "Why not?" She said, "Because Allah, the Exalted, Almighty says:

﴿... And [if] you have given one of them a *Qintār* [of gold, i.e. a great amount as *Mahr*], take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and [with] a manifest sin?﴾

(*Qur'an* 4: 20)."

'Umar said: "A woman is right and a man is wrong."¹⁶⁰ According to another report, he said: "O' Allah, forgive me! Everyone has more knowledge of religion than 'Umar." Then he went back and ascended the *minbar* and said: "O' people, I used to forbid you to give women more than four hundred *dirhams* in their dowries, but (now) whatever anyone wants to give of his wealth of his own accord, let him do so."¹⁶¹

However, freedom of opinion is not absolute under Islamic shari'ah, and people do not have the right to express everything they

¹⁵⁹ *Uyoon al-Akhhbār*, 1/55, quoting from *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/579.

¹⁶⁰ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 2/213. It is attributed to az-Zubayr ibn Bakkār but there are breaks in the chain of transmission. It was also narrated by Abu Ḥātim in his *Musnad* and by al-Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan*, where he says that it is *musnal jayid*.

¹⁶¹ Abu Ya'lā said: its isnad is *jayyid*. *Majma' az-Zawā'id*, 4/283.

wish. Rather this freedom is limited by the need not to harm others by expressing one's opinion, whether that harm affects everyone or a particular individual. Among the things that 'Umar prohibited and restricted are the following:

*Misguided and misleading opinions concerning
Islam and following ambiguous issues*

Under this heading comes the story of the Nabataean in Syria who denied the divine decree (*al-qadr*).¹⁶² He had objected to 'Umar (ﷺ) when he was delivering a speech in Syria. When 'Umar said: "Whomsoever Allah sends astray none can guide," the Nabataean objected and denied the divine decree, saying: "Allah does not send anyone astray." 'Umar threatened to execute him if he expressed his *qadari* views openly again.¹⁶³

It was narrated that as-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed said: "A man came to 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ) and said, 'O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*,

﴿By [the winds] that scatter dust; And [the clouds] that bear heavy weight of water.﴾ (Qur'an 51 :1-2)?"

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked, "Are you of that type?" and he stood up, rolling up his sleeves, and he continued to whip him until his turban fell off. He said, "By the One in Whose hand is the soul of 'Umar, if I had found you shaven I would have beaten your head. Put his clothes back on him, sit him on the hump of a camel and take him back to his own land. Then let him stand up and address the people and say, 'Şabeeh¹⁶⁴ sought knowledge but he did

¹⁶² Namely Qusanteen al-Jâthaleeq on the way to Syria.

¹⁶³ *Al-Ahwa' al-Firaq wa al-Bada' wa Mawqif as-Salaf Minha*, by Dr. Nâsir al-'Aql, p. 223.

¹⁶⁴ His name was Şabeeh ibn 'Aseel al-Handhali, who asked 'Umar about the ambiguous verses in the Qur'an, and 'Umar accused him of having views=

not get it right.'” And he continued to be humiliated among his people until he died.¹⁶⁵

*Slandering people's honour on the basis
of freedom of speech*

‘Umar imprisoned al-Ḥuṭay’ah¹⁶⁶ because he slandered az-Zabarqān ibn Badr¹⁶⁷ in verse when he said:

“Do not travel around in order to achieve prominence.
Stay where you are and you will be fed and clothed.”¹⁶⁸

This was likening him to women who are given food, drink and clothing.¹⁶⁹ ‘Umar threatened to cut out al-Ḥuṭay’ah’s tongue if he persisted in slandering the Muslims and impugning their honour. Al-Ḥuṭay’ah wrote poetry whilst he was in prison, reminding ‘Umar of his children who had no one to look after them but him, so ‘Umar felt sorry for him and let him go, after taking a promise from him not to slander anyone among the Muslims.¹⁷⁰ And it was narrated that ‘Umar purchased the honour of the Muslims from al-Ḥuṭay’ah for the sum of three thousand *dirhams*.¹⁷¹

=similar to those of the *Khawārij*.

¹⁶⁵ *Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl as-Sunnah* by al-Lālkā’i, 30/634, 635.

¹⁶⁶ His full name was Jarwal ibn Mālik ibn Jarwal, and he was known as al-Ḥuṭay’ah because of his short stature.

¹⁶⁷ Az-Zabarqān ibn Badr at-Tameemi was a *Ṣaḥābi* whom the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) appointed in charge of the zakah of his people.

¹⁶⁸ *As-Sultāh at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 2/745.

¹⁶⁹ *Tafseer al-Qurtubi*, 12/173, 174.

¹⁷⁰ *Ash-Shi’r wa ash-Shu’ara* by Ibn Qutaybah, 1/327; ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Dr. Aḥmad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 223.

¹⁷¹ *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool*, 1/110, by Mahmoud al-Misri; *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb*, 1/376.

1.7.5. 'Umar's view on marriage to Jewish and Christian women

When 'Umar came to know that Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân had married a Jewish woman, he wrote to him, telling him to let her go. Ḥudhayfah wrote back to him saying: "Are you claiming that it is *ḥarâm* so that I should let her go?" He said, "I do not say that it is *ḥarâm*, but I fear that you (plural) may marry the immoral ones among them." According to another report he said, "I fear that you will neglect Muslim women and marry immoral women."¹⁷²

Abu Zuhrah said: "We must state here that it is preferable for a Muslim not to marry anyone but a Muslim woman, so that there will be perfect harmony between them in all ways. 'Umar (ؓ) forbade marriage to women of the people of the Book (i.e., Jewish and Christian women) except in cases where it served a higher purpose such as forging political ties by means of which he hoped to bring people together and open their hearts towards Islam, and so on."¹⁷³

Allah tells us in His Book that marriage to a believing woman, even if she is a slave, is better than marriage to a *mushrik* woman, even if she is free. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And do not marry *al-Mushrikât* [idolatresses] till they believe [worship Allah Alone]. And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a [free] *Mushrikah* [idolatress], even though she pleases you. And give not [your daughters] in marriage to *al-Mushrikoon* till they believe [in Allah Alone] and verily, a believing slave is better than a [free] *Mushrik* [idolater], even though he pleases you. Those [*al-Mushrikoon*] invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites [you] to Paradise and forgiveness by His Leave, and makes His *Āyât* [proofs,

¹⁷² Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 1/265.

¹⁷³ *Al-Aḥwâl ash-Shakhṣiyah* by Abu Zuhrah, p. 104.

evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.] clear to mankind that they may remember.﴾ (Qur'an 2: 221)

In this verse, Allah forbids marriage to *mushrik* women until they believe in Allah and in His Prophet, and He rules that a slave woman who believes in Allah and His Messenger — even if she is black and poor — is superior to a free *mushrik* woman even if she is beautiful, of good lineage and wealthy. By the same token, Allah forbids believing women to marry *mushrik* men even if the *mushrik* is more handsome, of better lineage and more wealthy than a believer.¹⁷⁴

Although marriage to *mushrik* women is forbidden according to this verse, marriage to Jewish and Christian women is permissible according to another verse, namely:

﴿... [Lawful to you in marriage] are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture [Jews and Christians] before your time...﴾ (Qur'an 5: 5)

This is a text which defines further the general meaning of the first text. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars.¹⁷⁵ But they still say that marriage to a Muslim woman is preferable. This applies if there are no negative consequences that will affect the husband, the children or the Muslim society. But if there are negative consequences, then the ruling is that such marriages are not allowed. This is the view of some contemporary scholars¹⁷⁶, and it is a view in which 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb set a precedent, as he was the first one to disallow marriage to Jewish and Christian women, on the basis of the following two points:

¹⁷⁴ *Fiqh al-Awlawiyat Dirāsah fī ad-Dawābiṭ*, by Muhammad al-Wakeeli, p. 77.

¹⁷⁵ *Al-Fiqh 'ala al-Madhāhib al-Arba'ah* by 'Abdur-Raḥmān al-Jazā'iri, 5/76, 77.

¹⁷⁶ *Fiqh al-Awlawiyat* by Muhammad al-Wakeeli, p. 77.

1. That it leads to Muslim girls being "left on the shelf" and doomed to a life of spinsterhood.
2. That the Jewish or Christian woman may corrupt the morals and religious commitment of the Muslims' children.

These two reasons are sufficient grounds for this prohibition, but if we look at our own times we will see many other, new, negative consequences which make the reason for prohibiting such marriages even more urgent.¹⁷⁷ Professor Jameel Muhammad Mubârak listed a number of these negative consequences, which include the following:

1. The wife from among the people of the Book may have a mission of spying on the Muslims
2. The introduction of *kâfir* customs and ways into the Muslim lands
3. It exposes the Muslim to acquiring the nationality of the *kuffâr*
4. The ignorance of Muslims who marry women of the people of the Book may make them like putty in the hands of those women, to be moulded and shaped easily
5. Those who are married to women of the people of the Book may feel inferior, which is something caused by ignorance of the religion of Allah¹⁷⁸

These negative consequences are sufficient to indicate that it is forbidden to marry Jewish and Christian women in our times.

The limits which 'Umar set on marriage to Jewish and Christian women were in harmony with the greater interests of the state and with the greater aims of the Muslim society. Nations which are advanced understand the harm that is caused when their men marry foreign women, and the danger that these marriages may bring to the homeland — whether inadvertently or deliberately; so they

¹⁷⁷ Op cit., p. 78.

¹⁷⁸ *Shaheed al-Mihrâb* by 'Umar at-Tilmasâni, p. 214.

impose limits, especially on their representatives and public figures, which is a valid and justifiable precaution. A wife knows many, if not all, of her husband's secrets, depending on the level of harmony and love that exists between them. Hence 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) set a precedent for all rulers who came after him, by understanding that marriage to women of the people of the Book could lead to grave consequences, for they are strangers among us who differ from us in all ways, and most of them remain Jewish or Christian and do not taste the sweetness of Islam with its loyalty and respect towards the husband. 'Umar understood all of that because of his knowledge of his religion and his sound understanding of human nature, and of what was beneficial and harmful to the Muslims. So he issued his orders on the matter immediately and in a decisive manner.¹⁷⁹

Freedom was protected and guaranteed at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, but it also had limits and restrictions. Hence the society flourished and advanced. Freedom is a basic right for individuals and societies, by means of which they realize themselves and fulfil their potentials. If freedom is taken away from a society, its most important fundamentals are taken away and it becomes as if it is dead.

Freedom in Islam sheds rays of light which make man conscious of his connection with Allah, and through this connection man can rise to the most sublime levels. He becomes eager to do righteous deeds and hastens to seek the pleasure of the Lord of heaven and earth. Freedom is one of the foundations of the Muslim society which was realized during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in the most sublime form, a shining example which reflects down throughout history.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb* by at-Tilmasāni, p. 214.

¹⁸⁰ *al-Mujtama' al-Islāmi* by Dr. Muhammad Abu 'Ajwah, p. 245.

1.8. The expenditure of the caliph, the introduction of the Hijri calendar and the introduction of the title *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*

1.8.1. The expenditure of the caliph

Because the caliphate is a religious act and a means of drawing closer to Allah, the one who takes on this role and does well in it should be rewarded, and his reward is with Allah, Who rewards the one who does good for his good deeds, and requites the one who does evil for his evil deeds.¹⁸¹ Allah (ﷻ) says:

«So whoever does righteous good deeds while he is a believer [in the Oneness of Allah — Islamic Monotheism], his efforts will not be rejected. Verily, We record it for him [in his Book of deeds].»

(*Qur'an* 21: 94)

That has to do with his reward in the Hereafter. With regard to his reward in this world, the caliph who devotes his efforts to the interests of the ummah and strives to carry out his duties towards it deserves to be compensated for that, because if a person's efforts are devoted to a purpose, he deserves to be rewarded twofold.¹⁸² The fiqhi principle is that everyone who is devoted to the interests of another must be supported by the latter, such as a *mufti*, *qâdi* or *wali*.¹⁸³ Taking payment in return for undertaking a task is something that is prescribed in shari'ah because the Prophet (ﷺ) gave payments to those whom he appointed to do certain tasks.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ *As-Sultāh at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/215.

¹⁸² *Al-Mabsoot*, 15/147, 166; *al-Mughni*, 5/445.

¹⁸³ *As-Sultāh at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/215.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 1/216.

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb became the leader of the Muslims after Abu Bakr, for a while he did not take anything from the *bayt al-māl*, until he started to suffer poverty as a result when his earnings from trade were no longer enough, because he was distracted from his business by the affairs of the people. He sent word to the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and consulted them about that. He said: "I have been distracted (from earning a living) by this matter; what am I entitled to?" 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (رضي الله عنه) said, "Eat and feed others." This was also the view of Sa'eed ibn Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl.¹⁸⁵ 'Umar said to 'Ali (رضي الله عنه), "What do you say about that?" He said, "Breakfast and dinner," 'Umar followed that, and he explained what he was entitled to from the *bayt al-māl* by saying, "I regard my entitlement from the *bayt al-māl* as being like the share of one who takes care of an orphan: if I can do without it then I will not take it, but if I need it, I will take from it on a reasonable basis."¹⁸⁶

It is reported that 'Umar went out to a group of the *Ṣaḥābah* and asked them: "What do you think — is any of the wealth of Allah (i.e., the wealth in the *bayt al-māl*) permissible to me?" They said, "The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* knows better than us about that." He said, "If you wish, I will tell you what is permissible for me of it: a riding beast to take me for Ḥajj and 'Umrah, a suit for the winter and a suit for the summer, sufficient food for my dependents, and my regular stipend like any other Muslim, for I am just a Muslim man." Mu'ammār said: "What he used to ride to go to Ḥajj and 'Umrah was a single camel."¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ Sa'eed ibn Zayd al-'Adawi, one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise.

¹⁸⁶ Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeh*. *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah* by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 270.

¹⁸⁷ *Musannaf 'Abdur-Razzāq*, no. 20046, quoting from *as-Sultāh at-Tanfeedhiyah*.

The Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Umar set the highest example for rulers of fulfilling the trust that they have undertaken. Abu Dawood narrated that Mâlik ibn Aws ibn al-Ḥadathân said: "One day 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb mentioned the *fay*' (war booty) and said, 'I have no more right to this booty than you, and no one among us has more right to it than anyone else, except in accordance with our status as indicated by the Book of Allah and the way in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) divided the booty: so a man may be given in accordance with his seniority, his efforts, the number of his dependents, and his need.'"¹⁸⁸

It was narrated from ar-Rabee' ibn Ziyâd al-Hârithi that he came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) and was surprised at his appearance and the way he carried himself. He said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the one who is most entitled to fine food, a fine mount and fine clothing is you" — for he used to eat coarse food. 'Umar lifted up a palm leaf that he had with him and struck him on the head with it, then he said, "By Allah, you did not say that for the sake of Allah. All you wanted was to appease me. I thought you were better than that. Woe to you, do you know the likeness of me and these people (the Muslims)?" He said, "What is the likeness of you and these people?" He said, "It is like some people who set out on a journey and gave their money to one man, saying, 'Spend on us.' Would it be permissible for him to keep any of it for himself?" He said, "No, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "That is the likeness of me and them."¹⁸⁹

The *fuqaha*' derived a number of rulings on the expenditure of the caliph from the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. These include the following:

¹⁸⁸ *Sunan Abi Dawood*, hadith no. 2950.

¹⁸⁹ *Mahd as-Sawâb*, 1/383; *aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/280, 281.

1. That it is permissible for the caliph to accept payment for his work. An-Nawawī¹⁹⁰, Ibn al-'Arabi¹⁹¹, al-Bahooti¹⁹² and Ibn Mufliḥ¹⁹³ all stated that this is permissible.
2. The caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar both accepted payment for that.
3. Their taking that payment was in return for their devoting all their time to taking care of the Muslims' affairs, as Abu Bakr and 'Umar both stated.
4. The caliph has the right to take that payment whether he needs it or not. Ibn al-Munee¹⁹⁴ was of the view that it is preferable for him to take it, because if he takes it that will be more helpful to him in doing his work than if he were not to take it, because then he will feel that his work is an obligation upon him.¹⁹⁵

1.8.2. The introduction of the hijri calendar

The hijri calendar is regarded as a development that had a major cultural impact. The first one to introduce this system was 'Umar. There are several reports which speak of the reason for that.

It was narrated that Maymoon ibn Mahrân said:

"A document that was dated in Sha'bân came to 'Umar, and he said, "Is this Sha'bân of last year, or Sha'bân of the coming year, or the Sha'bân we are in now?" Then he gathered the Companions of the Messenger of Allah and said to them, "Set up something for the people that they can refer to." Someone suggested using the Byzantine

¹⁹⁰ *Rawḍat at-Tālibeen*, 11/137.

¹⁹¹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 12/228, 229.

¹⁹² *Al-A'lâm* by az-Zarkali, 8/249.

¹⁹³ *As-Sulṭah at-Tanfeethiyah*, 1/218.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 1/219.

¹⁹⁵ *Sharḥ Muslim* by an-Nawawī, 7/137.

(Roman) calendar, but it was pointed out that it was too long as they dated it from the time of Dhu al-Qarnayn. Someone else suggested using the Persian calendar, but they said that every time a new king came along, he abolished what had gone before. Then they agreed to look at how long the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had stayed in Madeenah, and they found that he had stayed there for ten years, so they based their calendar on the Hijrah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).¹⁹⁶

It was narrated that 'Uthmân ibn 'Ubaydullâh¹⁹⁷ said that he heard Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib say: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb gathered the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr together and said, 'From when should we date our history?' 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (رضي الله عنه) said to him, 'From the time when the Prophet (ﷺ) came out of the land of *shirk*' i.e., from the day he migrated. So 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) adopted that date for the beginning of the calendar."

And it was narrated that Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib said: "The first one to establish the calendar was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه), two and half years into his caliphate. He reached a decision in consultation with 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib."¹⁹⁸

Abu az-Zanâd¹⁹⁹ said: " 'Umar consulted others concerning the calendar, and they agreed upon the Hijrah."²⁰⁰

Ibn H̥ijr narrated the reason why they chose Muḥarram for the beginning of the calendar and not Rabee' al-Awwal, the month in which the Prophet (ﷺ) actually migrated: the *Ṣaḥâbah* who advised 'Umar suggested four events that could be used as the starting-point for the calendar: the Prophet's birth, the beginning of his mission, his

¹⁹⁶ *Maḥq aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/316; Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 69.

¹⁹⁷ Ibn Abi Râfi', the freed slave of the Prophet, narrating from his father.

¹⁹⁸ *Târeekh al-Islâm* by adh-Dhahabi, p. 163.

¹⁹⁹ 'Abdullâh ibn Dhakwân al-Qurashi, who is *thiqah faqeeh*; at-*Taqreeb*, p. 302.

²⁰⁰ *Maḥq aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/317.

Hijrah and his death. But they found that there was some dispute as to the year of his birth and the beginning of his mission, and they abandoned the idea of dating the calendar from his death because that would provoke grief and sorrow in the Muslims. So there was no other option left but the Hijrah. And they put it back from Rabee' al-Awwal to Muḥarram because the initial resolve to migrate came in Muḥarram. The second Pledge of al-'Aqabah, which was the precursor to the Hijrah, had taken place in *Dhu al-Hijjah*; the first new month to begin after that pledge and resolve to migrate was Muḥarram, so it was apt that this month should be chosen for the beginning of the calendar... Then Ibn Hajar said: "This is the most appropriate event to be regarded as the beginning, which took place in Muḥarram."²⁰¹

By means of this important administrative event, 'Umar contributed to the creation of unity throughout the Arabian Peninsula, based on unity of religion, unity of the nation with no class differences, and unity of purpose by having a single calendar. Thus he was able to face his enemies, confident of victory.²⁰²

1.8.3. The title of *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*

When Abu Bakr (ؓ), who had been known as *Khaleefah Rasoolullāh* (The Successor of the Messenger of Allah) died, the Muslims said: "Whoever comes after 'Umar will be known as the Successor of the Successor of the Messenger of Allah (ؓ), and that will be too long-winded; let us agree upon a title which may be given to the caliph, by which successive caliphs may be addressed." Some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah said: "We are the

²⁰¹ *Fath al-Bâri*, 7/268; *al-Khilāfah ar-Râshidah* by Yahya al-Yahya, p. 286.

²⁰² *Jawlah Târeekhiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad al-Wakeel, p. 90.

believers (*al-Mu'mineen*) and 'Umar is our leader (*Ameer*).” So 'Umar was called *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, and he was the first one to be given this title.²⁰³

It was narrated from Ibn Shihâb that 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez (ﷺ) asked Abu Bakr ibn Sulaymân ibn Abi Khaythamah²⁰⁴:

“Why did Abu Bakr (ﷺ) used to write, 'From Abu Bakr, the Successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ),' whereas 'Umar (ﷺ) used to write, 'From 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, the Successor of Abu Bakr? Who was first one to write "From *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" He said, 'My grandmother ash-Shifa'²⁰⁵, who was one of the first women to migrate, and when 'Umar went to the market he used to visit her, told me that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote to a governor in Iraq²⁰⁶ saying: 'Send me two noble and strong men so that I can ask them about Iraq and its people.' The governor of Iraq sent him Labeed ibn Rabee'ah and 'Adiyy ibn Hâtim. They came to Madeenah and dismounted in the courtyard of the mosque, then they entered the mosque, where they found 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ (may Allah be pleased with him). They said to him, 'O' 'Amr, ask permission for us to enter and meet the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' 'Amr entered and said, 'Peace be upon you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' 'Umar said to him, 'Why are you calling me by this name, O' son of al-Âṣ? You have to tell me where you got these words from.' He said, 'Yes. Labeed ibn Rabee'ah and 'Adiyy ibn Hâtim came and said, 'Ask permission for us to enter and meet the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*,' and I said, 'By Allah you have got his name right, for he is the leader and we are the believers.' And from that day on, this name was used in all

²⁰³ *At-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/281.

²⁰⁴ Al-'Adawi al-Madani, who is *thiqah*; *at-Taqrīb*, p. 207. and p. 155 note 4.

²⁰⁵ Ash-Shifa' bint 'Abdullâh al-'Adawiyah, who became Muslim before the Hijrah.

²⁰⁶ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/312.

letters.’”²⁰⁷ According to another report, ‘Umar said: “You are the believers and I am your leader,” so he gave this title to himself.²⁰⁸ Thus ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) was the first one to be called *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, and no one did that before him. If the researcher studies the words of the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them all), he will see that they were all agreed upon this title, so this title became well known throughout all the regions during his reign.²⁰⁹

2. ‘Umar’s Character, his Family Life and his Respect for *Ahl al-Bayt* (The Prophet’s Household)

2.1. The most important characteristics of ‘Umar

The key to ‘Umar’s personality is his faith in Allah and his preparations for the Last Day. This faith is the reason for the remarkable balance in the personality of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). Thus his strength did not undermine his fairness, his authority did not undermine his mercy, and his richness did not undermine his humility. Thus he deserved the help and support of Allah, and he fulfilled the meaning of *Tawḥeed* by knowledge, certain faith, acceptance, submission, sincerity, and love. He had a sound understanding of the true nature of faith and the meaning of *Tawḥeed*, and the effects of his deep faith were manifested in his life. The most important effects of that faith were:

²⁰⁷ *Al-Mustadrak*, 3/81,82, adh-Dhahabi said it is *ṣaḥeḥ*.

²⁰⁸ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 1/312.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 1/313.

2.1.1. His deep fear of Allah which led him to take stock of himself

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to say: "Remember the Fire a great deal, for its heat is intense, its bottom is deep and the stay therein is long."²¹⁰

One day a Bedouin came to him and said:

"O' good 'Umar, may you be rewarded with Paradise. Give me something to support my daughters and their mother. I adjure you by Allah to do it."

He said, "If I do not do it, what then, O' Bedouin?" He said, "By Allah, you will be questioned about it... and there will only be either Hell or Paradise."

'Umar wept until his beard became wet with his tears, then he said, "O' slave, give him this shirt of mine because of that Day, not because of his words, for by Allah I do not own any other shirt."²¹¹

'Umar wept greatly because he was moved by the words of this Bedouin which reminded him of the Reckoning on the Day of Resurrection, even though there is no mention that he ever wronged anyone; rather it was due to his great fear of Allah that he wept before everyone who reminded him of the Day of Resurrection.²¹²

Because of his great fear of Allah, he used to take stock of himself harshly. If he thought that he had wronged someone, he would look for him and tell him to settle the score with him. He would go to the people and ask them about their needs; if they told him about them then he would meet those needs. But he told them not to distract him with personal complaints when he was dealing with

²¹⁰ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa' al-Kirâm*, p. 155.

²¹¹ *Tāreekh Baghdād*, 4/312.

²¹² *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19/46.

matters of public interest. One day he was busy dealing with some public matter²¹³ when a man came to him and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, come with me and help me deal with so and so, for he has wronged me." 'Umar raised his stick and hit the man on the head, and said, "You ignore 'Umar when he comes and checks on you, then when he is busy dealing with the Muslims' affairs you come to him!" The man went away complaining, then 'Umar said, "Bring the man to me!" When they brought him back, 'Umar threw the stick to him and said, "Take the stick and hit me with it as I hit you." The man said, "No, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. I give it up for the sake of Allah and for your sake." 'Umar said, "Not like that. Either give it up for the sake of Allah and seeking the reward that is with Him, or give it up for my sake." The man said, "I give it up for the sake of Allah, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." The man went away, and 'Umar went into his house²¹⁴, accompanied by some people among whom was al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, who narrated what he saw, "... He started to pray and he prayed two *rak'ahs* then sat. He said, 'O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb, you were lowly and Allah raised you in status; you were astray and Allah guided you; you were humble and Allah honoured you, then He put you in charge of the Muslims. Then a man came asking your help and you hit him. What will you say to your Lord tomorrow when you meet Him?' And he started to criticize himself in a manner that made me think that he was the best of the people on earth."²¹⁵

It was narrated from Iyās ibn Salamah that his father said to him: " 'Umar (ؓ) passed by whilst I was in the market, going on some errand carrying a stick. He said, 'Move out of the way, O' Salamah!' then he dealt me a blow with the stick but it only hit the edge of my garment. I moved out of the way and he said no more

²¹³ *Al-Fârooq* by ash-Sharqâwi, p. 222.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ *Mahd as-Şawâb*, 2/503.

until the following year, when he met me in the market and said, 'O' Salamah, do you intend to go for Hajj this year?' I said, 'Yes, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' He took me by the hand and did not let my hand go until he entered his house and brought out a bag containing six hundred *dirhams*. He said, 'O' Salamah, use this and know that it is in return for the blow I dealt you last year.' I said, 'By Allah, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I did not remember it until you reminded me.' He said, 'By Allah, I have not forgotten it yet.'"²¹⁶

'Umar (ؓ) used to say, when he was checking himself: "Take stock of your selves before you are brought to account; weigh yourselves before you are weighed, and prepare yourselves for the great judgement."

«That Day shall you be brought to Judgement, not a secret of you will be hidden.»
(*Qur'an* 69: 18)."²¹⁷

Because of his great fear of Allah and his strictness in taking stock of himself, he would say: "If a lamb were to die on the banks of the Euphrates, I would fear that Allah might call 'Umar to account for it."²¹⁸

It was narrated that 'Ali (ؓ) said: "I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ؓ) rushing by on a camel and I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, where are you going?' He said, 'One of the zakah camels has run away!' I said, 'You have caused humiliation to the caliphs who come after you.' He said, 'O' Abu al-Hasan, do not blame me, for by the One Who sent Muhammad as a Prophet, if a female kid were to die on the banks of the Euphrates, 'Umar would be taken to task for it on the Day of Resurrection.'"²¹⁹

²¹⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/244; its isnad is *ḍa'eef*.

²¹⁷ *Mukhtaṣar Manhâj al-Qâsideen*, p. 372; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 143.

²¹⁸ *Manâqib 'Umar*, Pp. 160, 161.

²¹⁹ *Manâqib 'Umar*, p. 161.

It was narrated that Abu Salāmah said:

"I came to 'Umar when he was hitting men and women in the *Haram* at a sink where they were doing *wuḍoo*', in order to separate them. Then he said, 'O' So and so!' I said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'I am displeased with you. Did I not tell you to designate one sink for men and another for women?' Then he went away and was met by 'Ali (ؓ), and he said to him, 'I fear that I may be doomed.' He asked, 'Why would you be doomed?' He said, 'I hit men and women in the *Haram* (Sanctuary) of Allah.' 'Ali said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you are a shepherd (in charge of the people); if you did that out of sincerity and in order to set things right, Allah will never punish you, but if you hit them for no reason then you are the wrongdoer.'"²²⁰

It was narrated that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "Whilst 'Umar (ؓ) was going around in the lanes of Madeenah, he thought of this verse:

﴿And those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly...﴾
(*Qur'an* 33: 58)

He went to Ubayy ibn Ka'b and entered his house when he was sitting on a cushion. He took it from beneath him and said, 'Take it, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' He kicked it away with his foot and sat down, and recited the verse to him, and said, 'I am afraid that I am the one referred to in this verse, and that I have annoyed the believers.' He said, 'You cannot but keep an eye on your people, and issue commands and prohibitions.' 'Umar said, 'I see what you mean, but Allah knows best.'"²²¹

²²⁰ *Musannaf 'Abdur-Razzâq*, 1/75, 76, its isnad is *ḥasan*; *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/623.

²²¹ *Manâqib 'Umar*, p. 162; *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/623.

Sometimes 'Umar would light a fire and put his hand over it and say: "O' son of al-Khaṭṭāb, can you bear this?"²²²

When Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaṣ sent the cloak, sword, pants, shirt, crown and shoes of Chosroes to 'Umar after the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, 'Umar looked at the people and the tallest and most well built of them was Surâqah ibn Ja'tham al-Madlaji. He said: "O' Surâqah, get up and put these clothes on." He stood up and put them on, and he hoped to keep them. 'Umar said to him: "Walk over there," so he walked away. Then he said, "Come back," so he came back. Then he said: "Excellent! A Bedouin from Banu Madlaj wearing the cloak, trousers, sword, belt, crown and shoes of Chosroes. What a day, O' Surâqah, when you are wearing some of the belongings of Chosroes. It will be an honour for you and your people. Take it off." So Surâqah took it off, and 'Umar said: "[O' Allah], You withheld this from Your Messenger and Prophet, and he was dearer to You than me, and You withheld it from Abu Bakr, who was dearer to You than me, then You gave it to me. I seek refuge from You lest Your giving it to me be a test." Then he wept until those who were with him felt sorry for him. Then he said to 'Abdur-Raḥmân: "I urge you, sell it and share out (its price) before evening comes."²²³ And there are many similar stories.

2.1.2. His asceticism (*zuhd*)

From his living the Qur'an, spending time with the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) and thinking about this life, 'Umar understood that this world is the realm of tests and trials, and as such is a preparation for the Hereafter. Hence he was free of the

²²² Op. cit, p. 62.

²²³ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, 2/ 625.

influence of this world and its dazzling attractions, and he submitted himself fully to his Lord, both outwardly and inwardly. He reached conclusions that took root in his heart and helped him to renounce pleasure in worldly things. Among these conclusions were the following:

1. Certain faith that in this world we are like strangers or passers by, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Be in this world as if you are a stranger or a passer by.”»²²⁴
2. Certainty that this world is of no value before the Lord of Glory, except for what is done in obedience to Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“If this world were worth a gnat’s wing before Allah, He would not give a *kāfir* a drink of water from it.”»²²⁵ And he said, «“This world is cursed and everything in it is cursed, apart from remembrance of Allah and the like, or a scholar, or a seeker of knowledge.”»²²⁶
3. Its time is almost over. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“The Hour and I have been sent like these two,” (and he gestured with) his index finger and middle finger.»²²⁷
4. That the Hereafter is what will abide, as the believer among the family of Pharaoh said:

«O’ my people! Truly, this life of the world is nothing but a [quick passing] enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever. Whosoever does an evil deed, will not be requited except the like thereof; and whosoever does a righteous deed, whether male or female and is a true believer [in the Oneness of Allah], such will enter Paradise, where they will be provided therein

²²⁴ Tirmidhi, *Kitāb az-Zuhd*, hadith no. 2333; it is a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith.

²²⁵ Ibid, hadith no. 2320.

²²⁶ Ibid, hadith no. 2322. He said: it is *ḥasan ghareeb*.

²²⁷ Muslim, *Kitāb al-Fitan wa al-Ashrāt as-Sā’ah*, hadith nos. 132-135.

[with all things in abundance] without limit.﴾

(*Qur'an* 40:39-40)²²⁸

The truths that took root in Umar's heart caused him to despise this world and its vanities, and to renounce its pleasures. There follow some examples of his attitude which indicate his renunciation of this transient realm.

It was narrated that Abu al-Ashhab²²⁹ said: " 'Umar passed by a garbage dump and stopped there, and it was as if his companions were bothered by it (the smell). He said, 'This is this world of yours which you are so eager for and you weep over.' "²³⁰

It was narrated from Sâlim ibn 'Abdullâh that 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb used to say: "By Allah, if we wanted the pleasures of this world we would not care if we gave orders that a female goat be cooked for us, and we would order that the finest bread be baked for us, and raisins be soaked for us in vessels until they were like the eyes of partridges, and we would eat and drink all that. But we want to save our pleasures, because we have heard that Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection),

﴿... You received your good things in the life of the world...﴾

(*Qur'an* 46: 20)

It was narrated that Abu 'Imrân al-Jawni said that 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb said: "We have more knowledge of fine food than many who eat it, but we would rather leave it for another Day,

﴿The Day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her

²²⁸ From *Akhlâq an-Nasr fee Jayl aş-Şahâbah* by Dr. as-Sayyid Muhammad Nooh, Pp. 48, 49.

²²⁹ Ja'far ibn Hayân aş-Şa'dî.

²³⁰ *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 118.

nursling, and every pregnant one will drop her load.﴾

(Qur'an 22: 2)''

'Umar said: "I thought about the matter, and I realized that if I wanted this world, that would damage my prospects in the Hereafter, and if I wanted the Hereafter, that would damage my prospects in this world, and if this is the case, I would rather my prospects be damaged in this transient world."²³¹

He delivered a speech to the people when he was caliph, wearing an *izâr* (waist wrapper) on which there were twelve patches²³², and he circumambulated the House of Allah wearing an *izâr* on which there were twelve patches, one of which was made of red leather.²³³

He was late one Friday, then he came out and apologized to the people for keeping them waiting. He said: "I was late because of this garment of mine; it was being washed and I do not have any other garment."²³⁴

It was narrated that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Âmir ibn Rabee'ah said: "I set out for Ḥajj with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, from Madeenah to Makkah and back again, and no tent was set up for him. He used to put a cloak or a mat on a tree and shade himself beneath it."²³⁵

Thus was the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, who was in charge of the east and the west, sitting on the ground with his cloak beneath him as

²³¹ *Al-Hilyah*, 1/50. It is *da'eef* (weak) because of an interruption in its isnad. Also *Manâqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 137.

²³² *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 124; there are several isnads which strengthen it.

²³³ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/328, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²³⁴ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Fadâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 2/566.

²³⁵ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

if he were the lowliest of the people, or one of the common folk.

One day the Mother of the Believers Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها) entered his place and saw that he was living a harsh and ascetic life. She said: "Allah has bestowed a lot of good things upon us, and has granted you ample provision. Why do you not eat food that is better than this, and wear finer clothes than this?" He said, "You tell me whether this is right or wrong." And he mentioned the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the hard life that he lived, and he kept reminding her of how the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had lived when she was with him, until he made her weep. Then he said, "I had two companions who followed a certain path, and if I follow a hard path, perhaps I will join them in their life of luxury (in Paradise)."²³⁶

Worldly comforts were readily available to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and many nations were conquered during his reign, but he never batted an eyelid and was not attracted to them at all. Rather all his happiness came from supporting the religion of Allah and striving to weaken the *mushrikeen*. Asceticism was a prominent feature of his character.²³⁷ Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (رضي الله عنه) said: "By Allah, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was not the earliest of us to migrate, but I know why he is better than us: he was the most abstemious of us towards worldly matters."²³⁸

2.1.3. His piety

The piety of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) is attested to by the report narrated by Abu Zayd ibn 'Umar ibn Shabbah from Ma'dân ibn Abi Ṭalḥah al-Ya'mari, who said that some *qata'if* (a kind of sweet) and food were

²³⁶ *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 125; *aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/277.

²³⁷ *Al-Fâroq Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Dr. Lamâḍah, p. 11.

²³⁸ Its isnad is *jayyid*. Narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his *Muṣannaf*, 8/149; Ibn 'Asâkir, 52/244.

brought to 'Umar. He ordered that they be shared out, then he said: "O' Allah, You know that I have not given them provision and I will never keep it for myself except if I share their food. I am afraid lest You make it fire in the belly of 'Umar." Ma'dān said, "Soon I saw him take a vessel of his own and put it between him and the vessels of the Muslims. The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* 'Umar wanted to eat with the ordinary Muslims, because of the social benefits that that would bring, but he did not want to eat from the food that had been made with the public wealth of the Muslims, so he ordered that his own food, that had been made from his own wealth, be brought to him. This is a sublime example of integrity and piety, because there is no reason why his eating with the Muslims from their public wealth should be *ḥarām*, because he was one of them, but he wanted to refrain from that, seeking thereby what is with Allah. Because of his deep fear of Allah, he was worried that this might be an ambiguous matter, so he took steps to protect himself."²³⁹

It was narrated that 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Nujayḥ said: "I stayed with 'Umar (ﷺ) and he had a she-camel which he used to milk. His slave came and poured some milk for him one day, and he objected to the taste. He said, 'Woe to you! Where did you get this milk from?' He said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the she-camel's calf had free rein and drank all her milk, so I milked one of the camels from the wealth of Allah for you.' He said, 'Woe to you, you have given me fire to drink!' and he asked permission from some people to drink that milk, and they said, 'It is permissible for you, and its meat too.'²⁴⁰ This is the piety of 'Umar (ﷺ) — he feared the punishment of Allah for drinking that milk, even though he had not done so deliberately, and he could not feel at ease until he had asked permission for that from some of the senior *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) who

²³⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19/37.

²⁴⁰ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah*, p. 702.

represented the Muslims in that matter. This report and others like it indicate that the thought of the Hereafter with its reckoning and reward or punishment dominated 'Umar and was foremost in his thoughts, to such an extent that it controlled his conduct in this life.²⁴¹ 'Umar was deeply pious, and that extended to what he thought was his right and what was not his right. One day he fell sick, and they gave him some honey as a remedy. There was some honey in the *bayt al-mâl* which had been brought from one of the conquered lands. 'Umar would not take the honey, as the doctors advised him to do, until he had gathered the people, ascended the *minbar*, and asked the people for permission: "If you give me permission (I will take it), otherwise it is *ḥarâm* for me." The people wept out of compassion for him, and they all gave him permission, and they said to one another: "What a man you are, O 'Umar! You have made it difficult for the caliphs who come after you."²⁴²

2.1.4. His humility

It was narrated that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abbâs said: "Al-'Abbâs had a downspout which jutted out over a path used by 'Umar. 'Umar had put on his Friday clothes and two chickens had been slaughtered for al-'Abbâs. When 'Umar came past the downspout, water that had been thrown over the blood of the chickens came out and splashed onto 'Umar. 'Umar ordered that the downspout be removed, then he went back and took off his clothes and put on some clothes that were not his. Then he came and led the people in prayer. Al-'Abbâs came to him and said, "By Allah, that is the place where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) put it." 'Umar said to al-'Abbâs, "I insist that you climb

²⁴¹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19/28.

²⁴² *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa' al-Kirâm*, p. 113; *al-Fârooq* by ash-Sharqâwi, p. 275.

on my back and put it back in the place where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) put it." So al-'Abbās did that.²⁴³

It was narrated that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: " 'Umar went out on a hot day, holding his cloak over his head. A young man passed by on a donkey and he said, 'O' young man, let me ride with you.' The young man got down off the donkey and said, 'Ride, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' He said, 'No; you ride and I will ride behind you. Do you want me to have the more comfortable place (in the front) and you ride in the less comfortable place (at the back)?' So he rode behind the young man, and entered Madeenah riding behind him, with the people looking on."²⁴⁴

It was narrated that Sinān ibn Salamah al-Hudhali said: "I went out with some other boys to pick up *balah* dates, and there was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb carrying a stick. When the young men saw him, they scattered amongst the date palms. I stood up and there were some of the dates I had picked up in my *izār*. I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, this is what the wind blew down.' He looked at what was in my *izār* and did not hit me. I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the other boys are ahead of me now, and they will take all the dates I have.' He said, 'No (they will not). Move!' and he came with me to my family."²⁴⁵

A delegation came from 'Iraq to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, among whom was al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays. It was an intensely hot summer day and 'Umar had wrapped his head in an *'abayah* and was daubing the zakah camels with pitch. He said: "O' Aḥnaf, put aside your garment and come and help the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* with this camel, for these are the zakah camels, to which the orphans, widows and poor

²⁴³ *Ṣifat aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/285.

²⁴⁴ *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool* by Mahmoud al-Maṣrī, 1/157.

²⁴⁵ *Ṣalāh al-Ummah fee 'Uluw al-Hammah* by Sayyid al-'Afānī, 5/425.

are entitled." A man among the people said, "May Allah forgive you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. Why don't you tell one of the slaves who look after the zakah to take care of it?" 'Umar said, "What slave can be more of a slave than me or al-Ahnaf? The one who has been appointed in charge of the Muslims' affairs owes them the same duties of sincerity and fulfillment of the trust as a slave owes to his master."²⁴⁶

It was narrated that 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) said: "I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb carrying a vessel of water on his shoulder, and I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you should not have to do this.' He said, 'When the delegations came to me listening and obeying, I felt a little proud, and I wanted to put a stop to that.'"²⁴⁷

It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) said: "I heard 'Umar say one day, when I had gone out with him to a garden and there was a wall between me and him, and he was inside the garden, 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. Well done! By Allah, O' little son of al-Khattâb, you should fear Allah or else He will punish you."²⁴⁸

It was narrated from Jubayr ibn Nufayr that: "A group of people said to 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, 'We have never seen any man who judges more fairly, speaks the truth more plainly and is more harsh in dealing with the hypocrites than you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. You are the best of people after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' 'Awf ibn Mâlik²⁴⁹ said, 'You are lying, by Allah, there was one after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' He asked, 'Who was that?' He

²⁴⁶ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 343; *Ashâb ar-Rasool* by Mahmoud al-Maṣri, 1/156

²⁴⁷ *Madârij as-Sâlikeen*, 2/330.

²⁴⁸ Mâlik, *al-Muwatta'a*, 2/992, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²⁴⁹ Al-Ashja'i, a famous Companion who became Muslim after the conquest of Makkah.

said, 'Abu Bakr.' 'Umar said, ' 'Awf is right, and you are lying. By Allah, Abu Bakr was better than the scent of musk when I was still more astray than my people's camel' — i.e., before he became Muslim, because Abu Bakr became Muslim six years before him."²⁵⁰

This is indicative of 'Umar's humility and his respect for the virtuous, which was not limited only to those who were still alive, but included those who had died too. He did not agree to deny their virtue or ignore their memories, and he continued to speak well of them on every occasion; he strove to make the people respect those noble characters and not forget the great deeds they had done. Thus good deeds were perpetuated from one generation to another, and righteous deeds were not forgotten just because the ones who had done them were absent or had passed away. This is a sign of loyalty and faith.²⁵¹

'Umar did not approve of ignoring the virtue of the one who had held this position before him, or allowing it to be forgotten, for the nation which forgets or neglects the memory of those who have served it is a nation which is doomed to fail. Is it not better for the people to be taught about these sublime characters? 'Umar had learned the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), so he was disciplined in a manner which books of morals and manners, both ancient and modern, are unable to attain. The Book of Allah is still in our hands, and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is still preserved among us, in which there is incomparable learning and morals and manners.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ *Manāqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 14; *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/586.

²⁵¹ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 144.

²⁵² *Ibid*, Pp. 144, 145.

2.1.5. His forbearance

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said:

“ ‘Uyaynah ibn Ḥasn ibn Ḥudhayfah came and stayed with his brother's son, al-Ḥurr ibn Qays²⁵³, who was one of the group who were close to ‘Umar. The righteous were the companions and advisors of ‘Umar, whether they were old or young. ‘Uyaynah said to his brother's son, ‘O’ son of my brother, you are close to the caliph, so seek permission for me to enter and meet him.’ He said, ‘I will ask permission for you to meet him.’ Ibn ‘Abbâs said, ‘So al-Ḥurr asked for permission for ‘Uyaynah to enter and ‘Umar gave him permission to enter. When he entered, he said, ‘O’ son of al-Khaṭṭâb, by Allah, you are not generous with us and you do not judge fairly among us.’ ‘Umar became angry and wanted to punish him, but al-Ḥurr said to him, ‘O’ *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, Allah, the Exalted, Almighty said to His Prophet:

﴿Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish [i.e. don't punish them].﴾ (Qur'an 7: 199)

— and this is one of the foolish.” By Allah, ‘Umar did not do anything after he had recited this verse to him, and he would show respect to the Book of Allah.²⁵⁴ When he heard this verse, he calmed down and turned away from the man who had slandered his character by accusing him of miserliness and slandered his religious commitment by accusing him of being unfair in sharing out wealth. This is what ‘Umar was striving hard to achieve. Who among us can exercise such self-restraint at the time of anger?

²⁵³ Al-Ḥurr ibn Qays al-Fazâri, a Companion who became Muslim with the delegation of Banu Fazârah.

²⁵⁴ Bukhari, hadith nos. 6856, 4366.

When 'Umar delivered a speech in al-Jābiyah in Syria, he spoke of wealth and how it was to be divided, and of other matters, among which he said: "I apologize to you for Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, for I ordered him to keep this money for the weak among the *Muhājireen*, but he gave it to the strong, the noble and the eloquent. So I dismissed him and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh instead." Abu 'Amr ibn Ḥaṣṣ ibn al-Mugheerah stood up and said, "By Allah, that is not acceptable, O' 'Umar. You have dismissed someone who was appointed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have sheathed a sword that was unsheathed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have dismantled something that was set up by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have broken the ties of kinship and envied your cousin." 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: "You are a close relative and young in age, and you are angry because he is your cousin."

These are some of the attributes which were the fruits of 'Umar's *Tawḥeed* and faith in Allah, and his preparations to meet Allah, the Exalted, Almighty. The scholars have discussed the features of his personality, the most important of which were the strength of his religious commitment, courage, strong faith, fairness, knowledge, experience, deep insight, dignity, strength of character, farsightedness, generosity, setting a good example, compassion, seriousness, resolve, toughness, piety and awareness of Allah. And they discussed his leadership skills as demonstrated during his caliphate, among the most important of which were his listening to criticism, his ability to motivate people and get the job done, his taking part in decision-making on the basis of *shoora*, his adaptability and flexibility during emergencies, and his keeping a close eye on his governors and agents. Throughout this book the reader will note these characteristics and more, but I do not want to list them all here for fear of being repetitive.

2.2. His life with his family

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: "The people will be honest with their ruler so long as the ruler is honest with Allah, and if the ruler is dishonest, the people will be dishonest."²⁵⁵

Hence 'Umar was very strict in checking on himself and his family. He knew that people were looking at him and watching closely, and that there was no point in being strict with himself if he let his family have free rein, for which he would be brought to account in the Hereafter and for which people would not show any mercy in this world. When 'Umar forbade the people to do something, he would go to his family and say: "I have forbidden the people to do such and such, and the people are watching you as a bird watches a piece of meat. If you break the rules, then so will they, but if you refrain then so will they. By Allah, if a man is brought to me who has done that which I forbade the people to do, I will punish him double, because of his relationship to me. So whoever among you wants (to do that), let him go ahead, and whoever wants to refrain, let him do so."²⁵⁶ And he used to keep a very close eye on the actions of his children, wives and relatives. There follow some examples:

2.2.1. Public facilities

'Umar forbade his family to make use of public facilities that had been set up by the state for the benefit of certain people, fearing lest he show favouritism to his family therein. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar said: "I bought some camels and let them graze in al-Ḥima (a common grazing area set up by the state), and when they grew fat I brought them (to sell). 'Umar entered the market and saw some fat

²⁵⁵ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Dr. Muhammad Qal'aji, p. 146.

²⁵⁶ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/893.

camels. He said, "Whose are these camels?" It was said, "They belong to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar." He started saying, "O' 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar... the son of the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. What are these camels?" I said, "Camels which I bought and sent to al-Hima, seeking what any other Muslim would seek." He said, "And they said, Take care of the camels of the son of the caliph, water the camels of the son of the caliph. O' 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, see what your capital is, keep it and give the profit to the *bayt al-māl* of the Muslims."²⁵⁷

2.2.2. His calling his son 'Abdullāh to account for what he bought of the booty of Jaloola'

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar said: "I was present at Jaloola' — one of the battles in Persia — and I bought some of the booty for forty thousand. When I came to 'Umar he said, 'What do you think, if you were shown the fire and it was said to you, 'Pay a ransom'? Would you not pay a ransom? It is as if I can see the people when they were buying and selling, saying, 'It is 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the son of the caliph and the most beloved of people to him,' and that is true. So they would rather give you a lower price than a higher price. I am in charge of dividing the booty and I will give you most of what a merchant of Quraysh would make; for each *dirham* you are allowed to make one *dirham*.'"

Then he called the traders and they bought it from him for four hundred thousand *dirhams*, and he gave me eighty thousand *dirhams*, and sent the rest to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs to share it out."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ *Manâqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 157, 158.

²⁵⁸ *Tāreekh al-Islām* by adh-Dhahabi; *Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen*, Pp. 270, 271.

2.2.3. Not allowing facilities to be brought because of ties of kinship

It was narrated that Aslam said: “ ‘Abdullâh and ‘Ubaydullâh the sons of ‘Umar went out with an army to Iraq, and when they came back, they passed by Abu Moosa al-Ash‘ari, who was the governor of Baṣra. He welcomed them and said, ‘If there is anything I can do for you, I shall.’ Then he said, ‘Yes, here is some of the wealth of Allah which I want to send to the caliph. I will lend it to you to buy some goods from Iraq which you can sell in Madeenah, then you can give the capital to the caliph and keep the profit.’ So they did that, and he wrote to ‘Umar, telling him to take the money from them. When they came to ‘Umar, he said, ‘Did he lend to the whole army as he lent to you?’ They said, “No.” ‘Umar said, “Give me the wealth and the profit.” ‘Abdullâh kept quiet, but ‘Ubaydullâh said, “You should not do that, O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*. If the money had been lost or diminished, we would have paid it back.” He said, “Give me the money.” ‘Abdullâh kept quiet, and ‘Ubaydullâh kept saying the same thing. Then a man among those who were sitting with ‘Umar said, “O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, why don’t you make it a partnership (profit sharing)?”²⁵⁹ So ‘Umar took the capital and half of the profits, and ‘Abdullâh and ‘Ubaydullâh took the other half of the profits, They said that this was the first partnership in Islam.

2.2.4. Giving precedence to Usâmah ibn Zayd over ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) in giving

‘Umar used to divide wealth and he would give precedence to some people over others on the basis of who came to Islam first and

²⁵⁹ *Al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 244.

who was related to the Prophet (ﷺ). So he gave Usâmah ibn Zayd (رضي الله عنه) four thousand, and he gave 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) three thousand. He said: "O' my father, you gave Usâmah ibn Zayd four thousand and you gave me three thousand. Is his father's virtue not the same as yours, and is his virtue not the same as mine?" 'Umar said, "His father was more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than your father, and he was more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than you."²⁶⁰

2.2.5. "I spent on you for a month"

'Âṣim ibn 'Umar said: " 'Umar sent Yarfa' (his freed slave) to me and I came to him and found him sitting in the mosque. He praised Allah, then he said, 'I do not think that any of the wealth is permissible for me before I become in charge of it, except by right. Then when I become in charge of it, it cannot be more impermissible for me. I spent on you from the wealth of Allah for a month, but I am not going to give you any more. And I gave you some of the produce of al-'Âliyah, so take its price and go to one of the merchants of your people and stay by his side. If he buys or sells anything, go in partnership with him and spend on yourself and on your family.' So I went and did that."²⁶¹

2.2.6. "Take it, O' Mu'ayqeeb, and put it in the *bayt al-mâl*"

Mu'ayqeeb said: 'Umar sent for me to come at noon time, and I found him in a house demanding money from his son 'Âṣim. He said to me: "Do you know what this one has done? He went to Iraq

²⁶⁰ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafâ' al-Kirâm*, p. 113.

²⁶¹ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/277, its isnad is ṣaḥeḥ; *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 2/491.

and told them that he was the son of the caliph, and asked them for money, so they gave him vessels, silver and other goods, and a decorated sword." 'Âṣim said, "What did I do? All I did was go to some of my people and they gave me this." 'Umar said, "Take it, O' Mu'ayqeeb, and put it in the *bayt al-mâl*."²⁶²

This is an example of caution with regard to the wealth that a person acquires by virtue of his position. When 'Umar felt that his son 'Âṣim had acquired this wealth because of his being the son of the caliph, he was uncomfortable with the idea of letting him keep it, because he had not acquired it through any effort on his part, so it came under the heading of doubtful matters.²⁶³

2.2.7. 'Âtikah, the wife of 'Umar, and the musk

Some musk and amber came to 'Umar (ؓ) from Bahrain, and 'Umar said: "By Allah, I wish that there was a woman who was good at weighing, who could weigh this perfume for me so that I could divide it among the Muslims." His wife 'Âtikah bint Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl said to him, "I am good at weighing; let me weigh it for you." He said, "No." She said, "Why not?" He said, "I am afraid that you might take it and do this" — and he put his finger on his temple and said, "and wipe your neck, thus you will get more than the other Muslims."²⁶⁴

This is an example of 'Umar's piety and his cautious approach in matters of religious commitment. He refused to let his wife take charge of dividing this perfume lest she wipe some of it on her neck, in which case she would have gotten some of the wealth of the Muslims.

²⁶² *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah* by al-'Umari, p. 236. This report is *ḥasan*.

²⁶³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19/40.

²⁶⁴ *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 11; quoting from *at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19/30.

2.2.8. His refusal of a gift for his wife

Ibn 'Umar said: "Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari gave a mat to 'Umar's wife 'Ātikah bint Zayd, and I think that it was one cubit and a handspan. 'Umar saw it with her and said, 'Where did you get this from?' She said, 'Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari gave it to me.' 'Umar took it and hit her on the head with it, then he said, 'Bring Abu Moosa to me.' So he was brought to him and he (Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari) said, 'Do not be hasty, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' 'Umar said, 'What made you give gifts to my womenfolk?' Then 'Umar took it and hit him over the head with it, and said, 'Take it, we have no need of it.'"²⁶⁵

2.2.9. The gift of the Byzantine queen to his wife Umm Kulthoom

Al-Ustādh al-Khuḍari stated in his lectures that when the Byzantine king stopped attacking and sent letters to 'Umar and tried to approach him, and 'Umar sent envoys to him with the mail, Umm Kulthoom bint 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib sent some perfume, cups and women's combs to the Byzantine queen. These things reached her, and the wife of Caesar gathered her women and said: "This is a gift from the wife of the king of the Arabs, and the daughter of their Prophet." So she wrote to her and sent her a gift, which included a valuable necklace. When the mail reached 'Umar, he ordered that it be detained, then he order that the call "*aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)" be given. The people gathered and he led them in praying two *rak'ahs*, then he said: "There is no goodness in any matter that is decided without consultation (*shoora*). Tell me what you think about this gift which the wife of the Byzantine king has given to Umm Kulthoom." Some of them said, "It is hers in return

²⁶⁵ *Ash-Shaykhān Abu Bakr wa 'Umar min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, p. 260.

for her gift." He said, "But the envoy was the envoy of the Muslims and the mail was their mail." So he ordered that it be placed in the *bayt al-mâl* and that she be given something equivalent in value to what she had spent.²⁶⁶

2.2.10. "Umm Sulayṭ has more right to it"

It was narrated that Tha'labah ibn Abi Mâlik said: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb shared out some aprons among the women of Madeenah, and there was one fine apron left over. Some of those who were with him said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, give this to the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who is with you' — meaning Umm Kulthoom the daughter of 'Ali. But 'Umar said, 'Umm Sulayṭ has more right to it.' Umm Sulayṭ was one of the women of the Anṣâr who had sworn allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). 'Umar said, 'She used to prepare food for us on the day of Uḥud.' "²⁶⁷

2.2.11. "You have been insincere towards your father and have been sincere towards your relatives"

Some wealth was brought to 'Umar, and news of that reached Ḥaṣṣah (رضي الله عنها) the Mother of the Believers. She said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, your relatives have a right to this wealth. Allah has enjoined that close relatives be given a share of this wealth." He said, 'O' my daughter, my relatives have a right to my wealth, but this wealth belongs to the Muslims. You have been insincere towards your father and have been sincere towards your relatives. Get up and leave.' "²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, by Dr. 'Abdul-Wahhâb an-Najjâr, p. 245.

²⁶⁷ *Fath al-Bâri*, 7/424 and 6/93; *al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 273.

²⁶⁸ *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 17; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 139.

2.2.12. "Do you want me to meet Allah as a treacherous king?"

A son-in-law of 'Umar came to him and asked 'Umar to give him something from the *bayt al-māl*. 'Umar rebuked him and said, "Do you want me to meet Allah as a treacherous king?" Later on, he gave him ten thousand *dirhams* from his own wealth.²⁶⁹

These are some incidents which demonstrate how 'Umar refrained from taking anything from the public wealth, and prevented his relatives and his family from benefiting from his position of authority. If 'Umar had allowed himself and his family free rein, they would have indulged and those who came after them would have indulged too. The wealth of Allah was under the control of the rulers, and it is natural, as we have seen all too often, that when a ruler stretches out his hand towards the public wealth, things go out of control and the *bayt al-māl* or the government's budget soon becomes defunct; things soon reach a level where this treachery is no longer hidden and the entire system collapses. It is well known that if a person is content, refrains from touching people's wealth and respects their rights, that makes them love him, and if he is their ruler, they will support him and obey him sincerely, and he will be dearer to them than their own selves.²⁷⁰

From the way in which 'Umar dealt with his family and his relatives, we can see one aspect of the way in which he conducted his role as caliph, which is setting a good example in both his private and public life. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib said concerning him: "You exercised restraint and your people exercised restraint; if you had been dishonest, they would have been dishonest. The fact that he practised what he preached and was tougher in checking on himself and his

²⁶⁹ *Tāreekh al-Islām* by adh-Dhahabi, p. 271.

²⁷⁰ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon*, by adh-Dhahabi, p. 271.

family than with his governor and agents brought him great respect from the people, and the elite and common folk alike trusted him.²⁷¹

Such was 'Umar, the Rightly-Guided Caliph, who reached an exemplary pinnacle through Islamic discipline. Faith in Allah filled his heart, a deep faith which made him an example for later generations. Faith in Allah and adherence to the teachings of this religion are still the tools which will make a leader the best possible example from now until the Day of Resurrection.²⁷²

2.3. His respect and love for the Prophet's family (*Ahl al-Bayt*)

Undoubtedly the family of the Prophet (ﷺ) enjoy a high status and level of respect from *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah*, who honour the rights which Allah has prescribed for *Ahl al-Bayt*. They love them and regard them as friends, and they follow the recommendations of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which he spoke of on the day of Ghadeer Khum: «“I remind you of Allah concerning the members of my household.”»²⁷³ They are the happiest of people to take this advice and follow it; they reject the way of the Râfidis who go to extremes concerning of the members of the Prophet's family, and the way of the Nâsibis who insult them and hate them. *Ahl as-Sunnah* are unanimously agreed that it is obligatory to love *Ahl al-Bayt* and it is *harâm* to offend them or mistreat them in word or deed.²⁷⁴ 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) demonstrated and explained to us the beliefs of *Ahl as-Sunnah* concerning *Ahl al-Bayt* (family of the last Prophet) in the way in which he dealt and interacted with them.

²⁷¹ *Al-Qiyâdah wa at-Taghyeer*, p. 182.

²⁷² *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 74.

²⁷³ Muslim, *Kitâb Faḍâ'il as-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 2408.

²⁷⁴ *Al-'Aqeedah fee Ahl al-Bayt bayna al-Ifrât wa at-Tafreet*, p. 59.

2.3.1. His dealings with the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ)

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to check on the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) and give generously to them. He would not eat any fine food or fruit without sending some of it to the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ); the last one to whom he would send anything was Ḥaḥṣah, and if there was any shortfall, she would be the one whose share would be affected.²⁷⁵ He also used to send their stipend to them. The following is the story of an incident which took place with the Mother of the Believers Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (رضي الله عنها). When he had worked out the shares of the Muslims, 'Umar sent to the Mother of the Believers Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (رضي الله عنها) her share. When it was brought to her, she said: "May Allah forgive 'Umar; my sisters are better able to handle a share like that than me." They said, "This is all for you." She said, "*Subḥān Allāh.*" Then she hid herself from him behind a curtain, and said, "Put it down and cover it with a cloak." Then she said to Barzah bint Rāfi': "Put your hand in and take a handful, and give it to Banu So and so (among her relatives and orphans under her care)." She shared it out until there was a little left under the cloak, then Barzah said: "May Allah forgive you, O' Mother of the Believers, by Allah we have a right to that." She said, "You may have whatever is beneath this cloak." She lifted up the cloak and found eighty-five *dirhams*. Then she raised her hands towards heaven and said: "O' Allah, do not let me live until the next time 'Umar distributes shares." Then she died, and she was the first of the Prophet's wives to join him — may Allah be pleased with her.²⁷⁶

Another example of how 'Umar honoured the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) was narrated by the Mother of the Believers 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها), who said: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to send to us our share

²⁷⁵ *Az-Zuhd*, p. 166, via Mālik; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²⁷⁶ A *ḥasan* report narrated by Ibn Sa'd, 8/190; *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 100.

of heads and feet (of animals, for food).²⁷⁷

When the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) asked 'Umar for permission to go for Ḥajj, he refused to give them permission until they insisted. Then he said: "I will give you permission next year, but this is not what I think." He sent 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf with them, and told them to travel one in front of them and one behind, and not to walk alongside them. When they wanted to stop, they were to stop in a mountain pass and (the two men) were to stay at the entrances to the pass so that no one would go to or visit them. And he told them that when they circumambulated the Ka'bah, no one was to circumambulate with them except other women.²⁷⁸

2.3.2. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (ؑ) and his children

'Umar showed a great deal of respect to the family of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and preferred them over his own children and family. We will mention some examples of that:

Al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Ali (ؑ) mentioned that: "'Umar said to him one day, 'O' my son, why don't you come and join us sometimes?' So I came one day but he was alone with Mu'âwiyah, and Ibn 'Umar was at the door but was not granted admittance, so I went back. He met me after that and said, 'O' my son, did I not see you coming to us?' I said, 'I came but you were alone with Mu'âwiyah, and I saw Ibn 'Umar come back, so I came back.' He said, 'You have more right to be given permission to enter than 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar, for all the blessings we have, as you can see, are caused by Allah, then you (i.e., *Ahl al-Bayt*),' and he lay his hand on his head."²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ A *ṣaḥeeḥ* report, narrated by Ibn Sa'd, 3/303.

²⁷⁸ *Al-Idârah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 126; *al-Fath*, 4/87.

²⁷⁹ *Al-Murtaḍa* by an-Nadawî, p. 118; quoting from *al-Isâbah*, 1/133.

Ibn Sa'd narrated from Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Bâqir that his father, 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, said: "Some suits were brought to 'Umar from Yemen and he distributed them to the people, and they put them on. He was sitting between the (Prophet's) grave and the *minbar*, and the people were coming and greeting him and making *du'â* for him. Then al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn came out of the house of their mother Fâṭimah (ؑ) and passed among the people, and they were not wearing any of those suits. 'Umar frowned, then he said, 'By Allah, I am not happy about what I have given you.' They said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you gave clothes to your people and you did well.' He said, 'I am not happy because of two young men who were passing among the people and were not wearing any of these suits because they were too big or too small for them.' Then he wrote to Yemen asking that two suits be sent quickly for al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. Two suits were sent to him and he gave them to them."²⁸⁰

It was narrated from Abu Ja'far that when he wanted to decide how much each Muslim was entitled to after Allah had granted conquests (and wealth started coming in), he gathered some of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf (ؓ) said: "Start with yourself." He said, "No, by Allah, (I will start) with those who are closest to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Banu Hâshim, the tribe of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." So he allocated something to al-'Abbâs, then to 'Ali, until he had given to people from five different tribes, ending with Banu 'Adiyy ibn Ka'b, and he wrote it down: those of Banu Hâshim who were present at Badr, those of Banu Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams who were present at Badr, then the next closest and the next closest. He allocated their shares to them, then he allocated shares to al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, because of their position in relation to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ Op. cit., p. 118, quoting from *al-Iṣâbah*, 1/106.

²⁸¹ *Al-Murtada* by an-Nadawi, p. 119.

The scholar Shibli an-Nu'mâni said in his book *al-Fârooq*, under the heading, "Rights and etiquette between the family and the Companions [of the Prophet (ﷺ)]" that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) did not make any decision about any serious matter without consulting 'Ali, who used to advise him with all sincerity. When he travelled to *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem), he appointed 'Ali in charge of matters of caliphate in Madeenah. The harmony and solidarity between them was further confirmed when 'Ali gave his daughter Umm Kulthoom, who was the daughter of Fâtimah (رضي الله عنها), to 'Umar in marriage²⁸², and named one of his own children 'Umar, just as he had named another Abu Bakr and a third 'Uthmân.²⁸³ No one names his children except after people whom he loves and regards as a good example.²⁸⁴

'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib was the first one whom 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb consulted (may Allah be pleased with them both), and 'Umar used to consult him about all matters, both major and minor. He consulted him when the Muslims conquered Jerusalem, and when al-Madâ'in was conquered, and when 'Umar wanted to go to Nahawand and fight the Persians, and when he wanted to go out and fight the Byzantines, and concerning the establishment of the Hijri calendar, and other matters.²⁸⁵

Throughout the life of 'Umar, 'Ali was a sincere advisor who feared for 'Umar's life. 'Umar loved 'Ali and there was deep affection and mutual trust between them. Yet despite that some people still insist on distorting history and narrating reports that suit them and their whims and desires, so as to give us a picture of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs which suggests that they were all plotting

²⁸² Op. cit., p. 119.

²⁸³ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 9/331-332.

²⁸⁴ *Al-Murtada* by an-Nadawi, p. 119.

²⁸⁵ *'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib Mustashâr Ameen al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Muhammad al-Hâji, p. 99.

against one another and all their affairs were run from behind the scenes.²⁸⁶

Dr. al-Bootī says: "One of the most obvious things that will be noticed by anyone who studies the caliphate of 'Umar is the distinct and pure-spirited cooperation between 'Umar and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both). 'Ali was 'Umar's primary adviser in all issues and problems, and whenever 'Ali offered a suggestion, 'Umar would adopt it out of conviction. It is sufficient for you to know that he said, 'Were it not for 'Ali, 'Umar would be doomed.' As for 'Ali, he was very sincere in all his affairs and in all situations. You have seen how 'Umar consulted him about going at the head of the army to fight the Persians. His advice was sincere advice that reflected his love and care for 'Umar, telling him not to go, and to run the war from where he was. He warned him that if he went, then he would leave a vacuum behind him that would be more dangerous than the enemy whom he wanted to confront. Do you think that if the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had declared that 'Ali was to be the caliph after him, that 'Ali would have turned away from the command of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and supported those who had supposedly usurped his right, or rather his duty, to become caliph, in such a sincere and constructive manner? Would the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) have ignored the command of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)? Could it even be imagined that they, led by 'Ali, would have unanimously agreed to that? So it is easy to draw the obvious conclusion, that up until this time — the end of 'Umar's reign, and indeed up until the end of 'Ali's reign — the Muslims had been united, and there had not been any confusion in the mind of any Muslim with regard to the caliphate and who was most entitled to it."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Op. cit., p. 138.

²⁸⁷ *Fiqh as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*, p. 529.

2.3.3. The dispute between al-'Abbâs and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) concerning the booty of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) from Banu an-Nuḍayr

Mâlik ibn Aws said: "Whilst I was sitting with my family before noon, a messenger came to me from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and said, 'Come to the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' So I went with him to 'Umar, and found him sitting on a bare bed, with no mattress, leaning on a leather cushion. I greeted him with *salâm* and sat down, and he said, 'O' Mâlik, some families from your people have come to us and I have ordered that some shares be allocated to them. Take them and divide among them.' I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, would that you told someone else to do that.' He said, 'Take them (and do that).' Whilst I was sitting with him, his doorkeeper Yarfa' came to him and said, 'Will you give 'Uthmân, 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, az-Zubayr and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs permission to enter?' He said, 'Yes.' So he let them in, and they came in and sat down. Then Yarfa' sat down for a little while, then he said, 'Will you let 'Ali and 'Abbâs come in?' He said, 'Yes.' So he let them in, and they came in and gave the greeting of *salâm* and sat down.

'Abbâs said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, judge between me and this one.' They were disputing about the booty that Allah had granted to His Messenger (ﷺ) from the wealth of Banu an-Nuḍayr. The group, 'Uthmân and his companions, said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, judge between them and give them a break from one another.' 'Umar said, 'Wait a minute. I ask you by Allah, by Whose permission the heaven and earth exist, do you know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «'We cannot be inherited from; what we leave behind is charity'» and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was referring to himself?' The group said, 'He did say that.' Then 'Umar turned to 'Ali and 'Abbâs and asked, 'I ask you by Allah, do you know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said that?' He said, 'He did say that.' 'Umar said, 'I will tell you

more about this matter. Allah allocated something special in this booty which He did not give to anyone else.' Then he recited:

«And what Allah gave as booty [*Fay*] to His Messenger [Muhammad] from them — for this you made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry. But Allah gives power to His Messengers over whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.»

(*Qur'an* 59: 6)

— (and said:) 'This applies only to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), but by Allah, he did not keep it for himself and withhold it from you, rather he gave it to you and distributed it among you, until only this wealth was left. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave his family what they needed for the whole year from this wealth, then he took what was left and put it in the *bayt al-mâl*. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did that during his lifetime. I ask you by Allah, do you know this?' They said, 'Yes.' Then he said to 'Ali and 'Abbâs, 'I ask you by Allah, do you know this?' They said, 'Yes.' 'Umar said, 'Then Allah took the soul of His Prophet (ﷺ), and Abu Bakr said, 'I am the successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' By Allah, Abu Bakr took it and used it in the same way as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had done, and Allah knows that he was honest and sincere, and sought to do the right thing. Then Allah took the soul of Abu Bakr, and I am the successor of Abu Bakr. I took it for two years of my reign and I used it as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr had done, and Allah knows that I was honest and sincere, and sought to do the right thing. And now you have come to me and spoken to me, when you were both in agreement. You have come to me, O 'Abbâs, asking me for your share from your brother's son, and this one — meaning 'Ali — has come to me asking for a share for his wife, from her father. I said to you both that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «'We cannot be inherited from; what we leave behind is charity.'» When I thought that I might give it to you, I said, 'If you wish, I will give it to you

both, on condition that you make a promise to Allah to use it as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did and as Abu Bakr did and I did since the beginning of my reign.' You said, 'Give it to us on that basis,' so I gave it to you. I ask you by Allah, did I not give it to them on that basis?' The group said, 'Yes.' Then he turned to 'Ali and 'Abbâs and said, 'I ask you by Allah, did I not give it to you on that basis?' They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'And now you are seeking a different judgement from me? If you are not able (to dispose of it properly), then give it to me and I will take care of it.' »²⁸⁸

2.3.4. 'Umar's respect for al-'Abbâs and his son 'Abdullâh (may Allah be pleased with them both)

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) demonstrated to the ummah the virtue of al-'Abbâs ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib, the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and how much he respected him and honoured his rights, when he prayed for rain by virtue of al-'Abbâs in the year of ar-Ramâdah, as we will describe below *insha' Allâh*. Indeed, 'Umar swore to al-'Abbâs, as we have seen above, that his becoming Muslim was dearer to him than his own father's becoming Muslim would have been, if it had happened, because al-'Abbâs's becoming Muslim was dearer to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).²⁸⁹

As a sign of the love that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb had for the cousin of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), he used to admit him to the gatherings of the senior *Ṣaḥâbah*, those who had been present at Badr, although they had sons the same age as him, and no one else shared this privilege. This is indicative of his virtue, knowledge and status with 'Umar. Bukhari narrated with an

²⁸⁸ Muslim, hadith no. 1757. At the end of another report it says: and they gave it back to him.

²⁸⁹ *Al-'Aqeedah fee Ahl al-Bayt bayna al-lfrâṭ wa at-Tafreet*, p. 210.

isnad going back to Ibn 'Abbâs that he said: «“ 'Umar used to admit me with those who had been present at Badr, and some of them asked, 'Why do you include this youngster with us, when we have sons like him?' He said, 'Because of what you know about him.' He called them one day and called me with them, and I do not think that he invited me that day except to show them my knowledge. He asked, 'What do you say about,

«When there comes the Help of Allah [to you, O' Muhammad against your enemies] and the Conquest [of Makkah]. And you see that the people enter Allah's religion [Islam] in crowds...» (*Qur'an 110:1-2*)?"

Some of them said, 'We do not know,' and some of them did not say anything. He asked me, 'O' son of al-'Abbâs, do you say the same?' I said, 'No.' He then asked, 'Then what do you say?' I said, 'It is foretelling the death of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Allah is telling him that when the help of Allah came and the conquest of Makkah, that is a sign that your death is approaching, so glorify the praises of your Lord and ask His forgiveness, verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and Who forgives.' 'Umar said, 'That is exactly how I understand it.' »²⁹⁰

Al-Hâfīdh ibn Ḥajar said that al-Baghawī²⁹¹ narrated in *Mu'jam aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* via Zayd ibn Aslam, that Ibn 'Umar said:

“ 'Umar used to call Ibn 'Abbâs and draw him close to him and say, 'I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) call you one day and wipe your head and say, «'O' Allah, give him understanding of Islam and teach him the meaning of the Qur'an.» »²⁹² This action of 'Umar's was an acknowledgement of the virtue, knowledge and understanding of Ibn 'Abbâs.”

²⁹⁰ Bukhari, hadith no. 4294.

²⁹¹ *Al-'Aqeedah fee Ahl al-Bayt bayna al-Ifrât wa at-Tafreet*, p. 210.

²⁹² *Fath al-Bâri*, 1/170.

Al-Hâfidh ibn Katheer stated that: “ ‘Umar (ؓ) often used to say, ‘What a good interpreter of the Qur’an ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Abbâs is.’ And when he came he would say, ‘The young man of the old men has come, the one who asked questions and who understands.’²⁹³ There was a great deal of mutual love and affection between ‘Umar and the family of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).”

3. Umar's Life in Society and his Concern with Checking on People's Conduct in the Marketplace

3.1. 'Umar's life in society

‘Umar's life in society was a living application of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). From various incidents we can see Islam embodied in his life. There follow some examples.

3.1.1. 'Umar (ؓ) and his concern for the women in society

‘Umar (ؓ) was concerned about the Muslims' womenfolk and daughters, and the old women. He would give them their rights and relieve them of any wrongs that were done to them. He would take care of families whose menfolk were away on jihad, and make sure that widows got their rights. In a well-known comment, he said: “By Allah, if I live longer I will not leave any widow of the people of Iraq in need of anyone else after this year.”²⁹⁴ There follow some

²⁹³ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 8/303.

²⁹⁴ *Shaheeh at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Hayât al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 373.

shining examples of his care for women:

*"May your mother be bereft of you,
how could you check on 'Umar?"*

'Umar went out in the darkness of night and saw Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydullāh (ؓ). 'Umar went and entered one house, then he entered another house. The following morning, Ṭalḥah went to that house and found a paralyzed, blind old woman. He said to her, "Who is this man who comes to you?" She said: "He has been taking care of me for such and such a time. He brings me what I need and takes away any rubbish for me." Ṭalḥah said (to himself): "May your mother be bereft of you, how could you check on 'Umar?"²⁹⁵

Concern for the weaker members of society is one of the main factors of success, and one of the greatest means of drawing closer to Allah. The leaders of Islamic movements, rulers of Muslim peoples, Imams of mosques and Muslims in general should pay attention to this aspect of their societies.

*"Allah heard this woman's complaint
from above seven heavens"*

'Umar came out of the mosque accompanied by al-Jarood al-'Abdi, and there was a woman who had come out into the street. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb greeted her with *salām* and she returned his greeting, and said, "O' Umar, I remember you when you were called 'Umayr in the market of 'Ukâdh, chasing the other boys with your stick. Not long after that you were called 'Umar, and not long after that you were called *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. Fear Allah with regard to the people and remember that whoever fears the warning (of the Day of Judgement), soon hardship will be made easy for him, and whoever fears death should worry about missing out (on doing

²⁹⁵ Akhbâr 'Umar, p. 344; Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb, 1/356.

righteous deeds)." Al-Jarood said, "You are being too harsh on the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, O' woman!" 'Umar said, "Let her be. Don't you know who this is? This is Khawlah bint Tha'labah, whose words Allah heard from above seven heavens, so 'Umar is more obliged to listen to her."²⁹⁶ According to another report, "By Allah, even if she stood and spoke until night came, I would not leave her except to go and pray, then I would come back to her."²⁹⁷ And according to another report: "This is Khawlah concerning whom Allah revealed the words:

«Indeed Allah has heard the statement of her [Khawlah bint Tha'labah] that disputes with you [O' Muhammad] concerning her husband [Aws ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit].»
(*Qur'an* 58:1)."²⁹⁸

"Welcome to our close relatives"

It was narrated from Zayd ibn Aslam that his father said:

"I went out with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ؓ) to the market, and a young woman ran after 'Umar and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, my husband has died and left behind young children. By Allah they cannot take care of themselves and they own nothing, and I am afraid that the hyena will eat them. I am the daughter of Khufâf ibn Eema' al-Ghifârî²⁹⁹, and my father was present at al-Ḥudaybiyah with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' 'Umar stood with her and did not move on. He said, 'Welcome to our close relatives.' Then he went to a strong camel that was tied near the house and loaded it with two big vessels which he filled with foodstuff, and he placed money and clothing

²⁹⁶ *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/777. It is *da'eef* because of the interruption in its isnad between Qatâdah and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb.

²⁹⁷ Ad-Dârimi, *ar-Radd 'ala al-Jahamiyah*, p. 45.

²⁹⁸ *Al-'Alw li'l-'Aliy al-Ghaffâr* by adh-Dhahabi, p. 63.

²⁹⁹ The Imam and *khaṭeeb* of Banu Ghifâr who was present at al-Ḥudaybiyah and died during 'Umar's caliphate.

between them. Then he gave the reins to her and said, 'Take it, for it will not finish until Allah gives you some more.' A man said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you have given her too much.' 'Umar said, 'May your mother be bereft of you! By Allah, I saw the father and brother of this woman besieging a fortress for a long time, then we conquered it, then the next morning we shared out the booty because of their actions.'"³⁰⁰

This is indicative of 'Umar's loyalty towards everyone who had done something for Islam, even if it was only a little. What loyalty is this, and how great is our need for it in these times when there is hardly any loyalty among many people.³⁰¹

*His proposal of marriage to Umm Kulthoom
the daughter of Abu Bakr*

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) went to 'Ā'ishah the Mother of the Believers (رضي الله عنها) to ask her for the hand of her younger sister Umm Kulthoom in marriage. 'Ā'ishah spoke to her sister, who replied: "I have no need of that." 'Ā'ishah asked, "Are you rejecting the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" She said, "Yes, for he lives a hard life and is very strict with women." 'Ā'ishah sent for 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ and told him about that, and he said, "O' Mother of the Believers, don't worry, I will sort it out." Then he went to 'Umar and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I have heard some news, but do not be upset about it." He said, "What is it?" He asked, "Did you propose marriage to Umm Kulthoom bint Abi Bakr?" He then said, "Yes. Does she think that she is not fit for me or that I am not fit for her?" He said, "Neither, but she is young and has been brought up in the care of the Mother of the Believers 'Ā'ishah, in a very soft and gentle manner, and you are harsh and we feel scared of you, and we cannot stand in your way, so

³⁰⁰ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, hadith no. 3928.

³⁰¹ *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool* by Mahmoud al-Maṣri, 1/177.

how about if she goes against you in any matter and you treat her harshly? You would have mistreated the child of Abu Bakr in a manner that is not right." 'Umar asked, "How about 'Â'ishah when I have spoken to her?" He said: "I will take care of that, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*."³⁰²

According to another report, 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, why don't you get married?" 'Umar said: "Perhaps that will be during the next few days." 'Amr said: "Who do you have in mind?" 'Umar said: "Umm Kulthoom bint Abi Bakr." 'Amr said: "What do you want with a young woman who is mourning her father day and night?" 'Umar said: "Did 'Â'ishah tell you to say that?" 'Amr said: "Yes." So he left her alone and Ṭalhah ibn 'Ubaydullâh married her."³⁰³

One of the wishful thoughts that a young girl may have is to marry the leader of her people. But here the caliph came proposing marriage without being forceful or imposing. With all freedom and determination the girl said no to the caliph and the caliph accepted that and gave up, without feeling upset or distressed, and without issuing threats and warnings, because he knew that Islam does not force a girl to marry someone she does not want. 'Amr was very eloquent in the manner in which he conveyed news of the refusal, and 'Umar was very smart in realizing the source thereof despite 'Amr's delicacy and tact.³⁰⁴ Indeed, 'Umar defended the right of girls to agree to those who proposed marriage to them when he said: "Do not force your daughters to marry an ugly man, for they like what you like."³⁰⁵

³⁰² *Al-Fârooq 'Umar* by ash-Sharqâwî, Pp. 210, 211.

³⁰³ *Shaheed al-Mihrâb*, p. 204.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 205.

³⁰⁵ *Uyoon al-Akhhbâr*, 4/11; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 141.

A man speaking to a woman in the street

Whilst 'Umar was walking in the street, he saw a man speaking to a woman. He hit him with his stick and the man said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, she is my wife!" He said to him, "Why are you standing with your wife in the street, making the Muslims talk about you?" He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, we have just entered Madeenah and are discussing where we should stay." 'Umar gave the stick to him and said, "Take your revenge on me, O' slave of Allah." He said, "It doesn't matter, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "Take your revenge." After he had said it three times, the man said, "It is for the sake of Allah." 'Umar said, "May Allah reward you."³⁰⁶

A woman complaining to 'Umar about her husband

A woman came to 'Umar and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, my husband is very bad and is not good." 'Umar said to her, "Who is your husband?" She said, "Abu Salamah." 'Umar knew him, for he was a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). 'Umar said to her, "We do not know anything but good about your husband." Then he asked a man who was with him, "What do you say?" He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, we do not know anything but that." He sent for her husband and told her to sit down behind him ('Umar). A man soon came back with her husband and 'Umar asked him, "Do you know this woman?" He said, "Who is she, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" He said, "She is your wife." He asked, "What is she saying?" He said, "She claims that you are very bad and are not good." He said, "What a bad thing she has said, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. By Allah, she is the best clothed of women and has the most comfortable house, but her husband is impotent." He said (to her), "What do you say?" She said, "He is telling the truth." 'Umar took his stick and started hitting her, saying, "O' enemy of yourself, you have taken his youth and

³⁰⁶ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 190, quoting from *ar-Riyāḍ an-Naḍrah*.

consumed his wealth, and now you are saying things that are not right about him." She said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, let me off this time, and by Allah you will not see me doing this again." He said to her, "Fear Allah and be a good companion to this old man." Then he turned to him and said, "Do not let what you have seen me to do to her prevent you from being a good companion to her." He said, "I will do that, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*."

'Umar said to a man who was thinking of divorcing his wife: "Why do you want to divorce her?" He said, "I do not love her." 'Umar said, "Must every house be built on love? What about loyalty and appreciation?"³⁰⁷

The provision of the sons of al-Khansa'

When the four sons of al-Khansa' were martyred and the news reached 'Umar, he said: "Give al-Khansa' the provision of her four sons, and continue to do that until she passes away." And she continued to take two hundred *dirhams* for each of them each month, until she passed away.³⁰⁸

Hind bint 'Utbah borrowing from the bayt al-mâl and doing business

Her husband before Abu Sufiyân was Ḥaṣṣ ibn al-Mugheerah, the paternal uncle of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed. That was during the *Jâhiliyah*. Hind was one of the best-looking and smartest women of Quraysh. Abu Sufiyân ultimately divorced her, so she asked 'Umar for a loan of four thousand *dirhams* from the *bayt al-mâl* (public treasury), then she went out to the land of Kalb where she bought and sold. Then she went to her son Mu'âwiyah, when he was 'Umar's

³⁰⁷ *Al-Bayân wa at-Tabayeen*, 2/101; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 113.

³⁰⁸ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. Sulaymân Âl Kamâl, 2/764.

governor in Syria, and said: "O' my son, 'Umar only works for the sake of Allah."³⁰⁹

During the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, women had the status to which Islam had raised them, so during that era we see women participating in many fields, such as the intellectual, literary and business spheres. 'Ā'ishah, Umm Salamah, Ḥabeebah bint Umm Ḥabeebah, Arwa bint Kurayz ibn 'Abd Shams and Asmâ' bint Salamah at-Tameemiyah were all highly accomplished in the fields of hadith, fiqh, literature and issuing *fatwas*. Other women excelled in poetry, such as al-Khansa' and Hind bint 'Utbah.³¹⁰ 'Umar acknowledged women's virtue and recognized that they were creatures with feelings, opinions and thoughts. Just as he consulted men, he also consulted women, and he gave precedence to the opinion of ash-Shifa' bint 'Abdullâh al-'Adawiyah. So what is left for women to look for outside of Islam, when the caliph himself consulted women concerning the affairs of state and accepted their opinions?³¹¹ 'Umar regarded himself as being like a father with children. He would go to the women whose husbands were absent and stand at their doors, saying, "Do you need anything? Do any of you want to buy anything? For I would not like you to be cheated in buying and selling." And they would send their slave women with him, and he would enter the market followed by a host of women's slaves; he would buy for them whatever they needed, and if any of them could not afford to pay he would buy it with his own wealth. When an envoy came from the border, 'Umar would take the letters from their husbands to them himself, and he would say: "Your husbands are (fighting) for the sake of Allah, and you are in the land

³⁰⁹ *Târeekh al-Islâm: 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, Pp. 298, 299.

³¹⁰ *Tatâwwur Târeekh al-'Arab as-Siyâsi wa al-Ḥaqâiri*, by Dr. Fâṭimah ash-Shâmi, p. 175.

³¹¹ *Shaheed al-Mihrâb*, p. 205.

of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If any among you can read (she may read her husband's letter), otherwise come near the door so that I can read (the letter) to you." Then he would say, "The messenger is leaving on such and such a day; write letters so that we can send them with him." Then he would go around to them with paper and ink and say: "Here are ink and paper; come close to the door so that I can write for you." And he would take the letters from those women and send them to their husbands.³¹²

3.1.2. Remembering and acknowledging righteous deeds

'Umar used to remember and acknowledge righteous deeds that the Muslims had done in the past. He was an excellent judge of character, and he said: "Do not be deceived by a man's eloquence; rather whoever fulfils trusts and refrains from impugning people's honour is a real man."³¹³ And he used to say: "Do not look at a man's prayer or fasting; rather look at his reason and honesty." And he said: "There are two (types of) men I do not fear for you: a believer whose faith is obvious and a *kāfir* whose *kufṛ* is obvious. Rather I fear for you the hypocrite who hides behind a show of faith but strives for some other purpose." 'Umar asked about a man who had given testimony, wanting to find out whether anyone could vouch for him. A man said to him: "I will vouch for him, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar asked, "Are you his neighbour?" He said, "No." He then asked, "Did you mix with him for a day and come to know his real character?" He said, "No." He asked next: "Did you travel with him? For travelling and being away from home reveal a man's true essence?" He said, "No." 'Umar said, "Perhaps you saw him in the mosque, standing, sitting and praying?" He said, "Yes." 'Umar said,

³¹² *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 339; *Sirāj al-Mulook*, p. 109.

³¹³ *Fiqh al-I'tilāf* by Mahmood Muhammad al-Khazandār, p. 164.

"Go away, for you do not know him."³¹⁴

A number of Muslims earned the praise of 'Umar when Allah enabled them to serve Islam in great ways. There follow a few examples of that:

"You believed when they did not, you came when they turned away, and you were loyal when they proved treacherous"

It was narrated that 'Adiy ibn Ḥātim said: "I came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb with some of my people, and he started giving each man of Ṭay' a share of two thousand and ignoring me. I went to him and he turned away from me. I came and stood in front of his face and he turned away from me. I said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, do you recognize me?' He laughed so hard he nearly fell on his back and said, 'Yes, by Allah, I recognize you. You believed when they did not, you came when they turned away, and you were loyal when they proved treacherous. The first charity which brought support and joy to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions was the charity of Ṭay', which you brought to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' Then he apologized and said, 'I have allocated it to people who are suffering extreme poverty, and to the leaders of their tribes, because of the responsibilities they have.'³¹⁵ According to another report, 'Adiy said, 'Then I do not mind.'³¹⁶

"Every Muslim should kiss the head of 'Abdullāh ibn Hudhāfah, and I will be the first"

The Romans captured the great Ṣaḥābī 'Abdullāh ibn Hudhāfah as-Sahami, and took him to their king, who said to him:

³¹⁴ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmān 'Abdullāh, p. 66.

³¹⁵ Muslim, hadith no. 2523; *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 316.

³¹⁶ *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 297; *Faṭḥ al-Bâri*, 7/706.

"Become Christian and I will share my kingdom with you and give you my daughter's hand in marriage." He ('Abdullâh) said to him, "Even if you gave me all that you possess and all that the Arabs possess to make me give up the religion of Muhammad (ﷺ) for the blink of an eye, I would not do it." He said, "Then I will kill you." He said, "It's up to you." So the king ordered that he be crucified and that the archers shoot him near his hands and feet, whilst he was telling him to become Christian, but he refused to do so. Then he ordered that he be taken down and a huge pot of copper be heated up. Then one of the Muslim prisoners was brought and thrown into it, and when he looked there was nothing left but bones. He again told him to become Christian, but he refused. Then he ordered that he be thrown into that pot, and he was lifted on a pulley to be thrown in, but he wept and the king hoped that he would respond and he again told him to become Christian. But 'Abdullâh said, "I am only weeping because I have but one soul to be thrown into this pot for the sake of Allah. I wish that I had as many souls as there are hairs on my body, so that they may all receive this torture for the sake of Allah." According to some reports, the king imprisoned him and deprived him of food and drink for several days, then he send wine and pork to him, but he did not touch them. The king summoned him and said, "Why did you not eat?" He said: "They were permissible for me (in that situation), but I did not want to give you the satisfaction." The king said to him: "Kiss my head and I will let you go." He said: "And will you let all the Muslim prisoners go?" He said, "Yes." So he kissed his head, and he let him go and he let all the Muslim prisoners go with him. When he came back, 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb said, "Every Muslim should kiss the head of 'Abdullâh ibn Hudhâfah, and I will be the first," and he stood up and kissed his head.³¹⁷

³¹⁷ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 2/610.

"Is Uways ibn 'Âmir among you?"

When delegations came from Yemen, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb would ask: "Is Uways ibn 'Âmir among you?" When he found him, he asked, "Are you Uways ibn 'Âmir?" He answered, "Yes." He asked, "From Murâd then from Qarn?" He said, "Yes." He then asked, "Did you have leprosy, then you were healed of it except for a space the size of a *dirham*?" He said, "Yes." He asked, "Do you have a mother?" He said, "Yes." He ('Umar) said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, 'There will come to you Uways ibn 'Âmir among the delegations from Yemen, from Murâd then from Qarn. He had leprosy, then he was healed of it, except for a space the size of a *dirham*. He has a mother whom he honours, and if he asks Allah for anything, He grants it to him. If you can ask him to pray for forgiveness for you, then do so.' So pray for forgiveness for me." So he prayed for forgiveness for him. 'Umar asked him, "Where are you going?" He said, "Koofah." He said, "Why don't I write a letter for you to the governor?" Uways said, "I prefer to live among the poor and humble people." The following year, one of the noble people (of Koofah) came back to 'Umar, who met him and asked about Uways. He said, "I left him in humble circumstances and with meager means." He said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, 'There will come to you Uways ibn 'Âmir among the delegations from Yemen, from Murâd then from Qarn. He had leprosy, then he was healed of it, except for a space the size of a *dirham*. He has a mother whom he honours, and if he asks Allah for anything, He grants it to him. If you can ask him to pray for forgiveness for you, then do so.' " That man went to Uways and said, "Pray for forgiveness for me." Uways said, "Rather you should do that for me, for you have just come from travelling for a good purpose. Pray for forgiveness for me." The man said, "Pray for forgiveness for me." Uways said, "Did you meet 'Umar?" He said, "Yes." So he prayed for forgiveness for

him. Then the people came to know the story of Uways, and he fled.³¹⁸

'Umar (ؓ) and a Mujāhid who honoured his mother

Some fighters came from Syria, heading for Yemen, and 'Umar had dishes of food that he would set out after *Fajr*. One of those men came and sat down, and started to eat, using his left hand. 'Umar — who used to watch the people whilst they were eating — said to him: "Eat with your right hand," but he did not respond. 'Umar repeated it, and he said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, it is busy." When he had finished eating, 'Umar called him and said, "What kept your right hand busy?" He brought out his arm and the hand was cut off. 'Umar said, "What is this?" He said, "I lost my hand on the day of al-Yarmook." He said, "Who does *wuḍoo* for you?" He said, "I do *wuḍoo* with my left hand, and Allah helps me." He said, "Where are you going?" He said, "Yemen, to my mother whom I have not seen for so many years." He said, "And you honour your mother too." And he ordered that he be given a servant and five camels from the camels given in charity, and he loaded them up for him.³¹⁹

A man who received a blow (when fighting) for the sake of Allah that left a scar on his face

Whilst the people were taking their allocated stipends from 'Umar, he lifted his head and saw a man who had a scar on his face. He asked him about it, and he told him that he had gotten it during a campaign. He said: "Give him one thousand," and he was given a thousand *dirhams*. Then he said, "Give him one thousand," and the man was given another thousand. He said that four times, and each time he was given a thousand *dirhams*. Then the man got

³¹⁸ Muslim, *Kitāb Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 2542.

³¹⁹ *Ash-Shaykhān Abu Bakr wa 'Umar min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, Pp. 174, 175.

embarrassed because of how much he was being given, and he left. 'Umar asked about him and was told, "We saw that he got embarrassed because of how much he was being given, and he left." He said, "By Allah, if he had stayed, we would have kept on giving to him as long as there were any *dirhams* left, a man who received a blow (when fighting) for the sake of Allah that left a scar on his face."³²⁰

'Umar's wish

It was narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said to his companions: "Make a wish." One of them said, "I wish that this house was filled with gold that I could spend for the sake of Allah and give in charity." Another man said, "I wish that it was filled with chrysolite and jewels that I could spend for the sake of Allah and give in charity." Then 'Umar said, "Make a wish." They said, "We do not know what to say, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "I wish that it was filled with men like Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh, Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, Sālim the freed slave of Abu Ḥudhayfah and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān³²¹ (may Allah be pleased with them), so that I might employ them in the service of Allah."³²² These were his brothers in faith, and 'Umar described sincere companions as follows: "You should look for sincere companions, for you will be happy with them; they will be a source of pleasure at times of ease and a support at times of calamity. Think positively of your brother until he does something that justifies your keeping away from him, and keep away from your enemy, and beware of your friend except those who are trustworthy, and there is no one who is trustworthy except one who fears Allah.

³²⁰ *Manāqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 74, its isnad is *ḍa'eef* (weak) because it is interrupted; *Mahd as-Ṣawāb*, 1/368.

³²¹ Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, 3/266 - classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by adh-Dhahabi; *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool*, 1/174.

³²² *Tahdheeb al-Kamāl* by al-Mazzi, 5/505; *Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān* by Ibrāheem Muhammad al-'Alī, p. 62.

Do not keep company with an evildoer lest you be influenced by his evil, and do not tell him your secrets. Consult those who fear Allah about your affairs.”³²³

‘Umar would think of one of his brothers during the night, and he would say, “What a long night it is going to be.” Then when he had prayed *Fajr*, he would go to (that person) and when he met him he would embrace him.”³²⁴

And he said: “Were it not that I like to walk for the sake of Allah, and sleep on the ground for the sake of Allah, or sit with people who choose the best words as one chooses the best fruit (i.e., they speak eloquently), I would like to have met Allah (i.e., died).”³²⁵

*In his view good deeds were the criterion
for differentiating among people*

In ‘Umar’s view, good deeds were the criterion for differentiating among people. When some of the leaders of Quraysh, led by Suhayl ibn ‘Amr ibn al-Ḥārith and Abu Sufiyân ibn Ḥarb, and some former slaves of Quraysh, Ṣuhayb and Bilâl, came to him, he gave the poor freed slaves permission to meet him before he gave permission to the leaders and nobles of Quraysh. The leaders got angry, and Abu Sufiyân said to some of his companions: “I have never seen anything like today. He gives permission to these slaves and leaves us at his door?” Suhayl said, “O’ people, by Allah I can see what is in your faces. If you want to be angry then be angry with yourselves. The people were called to Islam and so were you, but they hastened to accept it whilst you stayed behind. So how will you

³²³ *Mukhtaṣar Manhâj al-Qâsideen*, p. 100; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 139.

³²⁴ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 321.

³²⁵ *Ash-Shaykhân min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 225.

be if they are called on the Day of Resurrection and you are left behind?"³²⁶

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) attended funerals

It was narrated that Abu al-Aswad said: "I came to Madeenah and found that there was a sickness there which caused people to die in droves. I sat with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) and a funeral passed by. People spoke well of the deceased and 'Umar said, 'Yes, indeed.' Then another funeral passed by and people spoke well of the deceased and 'Umar said, 'Yes, indeed.' Then a third funeral passed by and people spoke badly of the deceased and 'Umar said, 'Yes, indeed.' Abu al-Aswad asked, 'What do you mean, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?' He said, 'I said the same as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «'If four people testify in the favour of a Muslim, Allah will admit him to Paradise.' We asked, 'And three?' He said, 'And three.' We again asked, 'And two?' He said, 'And two.' But we did not ask him about one.»"³²⁷

'Umar and the share of Ḥakeem ibn Ḥizām (رضي الله عنه)

It was narrated from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr that: «"Ḥakeem ibn Ḥizām said, 'I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he gave me, then I asked him and he gave me, then I asked him and he gave me. Then he said to me, 'O' Ḥakeem, this wealth is fresh and sweet; whoever takes it without hoping for it, it will be blessed for him, but whoever takes it with greed, it will not be blessed for him. He will be like one who eats and is not satisfied. And the upper hand is better than the lower.' Ḥakeem said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, by the One Who sent you with the truth, I will not take money from anyone after

³²⁶ *Manâqib 'Umar*, p. 129; *Fann al-Ḥukm*, p. 367.

³²⁷ Bukhari, hadith no. 2643; *Musnad Aḥmad*, hadith no. 139; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyah*.

you until I leave this world.' Abu Bakr used to call Ḥakeem to give him (money) and he refused to accept anything from him, then 'Umar called him to give him (money) and he refused to accept anything from him. He said, 'O' Muslims, I offered him his share of this booty that Allah had allocated to him, but Ḥakeem did not take anything from any of the people after the Prophet (ﷺ)'. '»³²⁸

*'Umar kissing the head of 'Ali
(may Allah be pleased with them both)*

A man complained about 'Ali to 'Umar, and when 'Umar looked into the matter he said to 'Ali: "Sit down alongside your opponent, O' Abu al-Ḥasan." 'Ali's expression changed, and 'Umar passed judgement concerning the matter, then he said to 'Ali, "Did you get angry, O' Abu al-Ḥasan, because I treated you and your opponent equally?" 'Ali said, "You did not treat me and my opponent equally, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, because you honoured me and called me Abu al-Ḥasan, using my *kunya*, but you did not call my opponent by his *kunya*." 'Umar kissed the head of 'Ali and said, "May Allah not keep me in a land where Abu al-Ḥasan is not there."³²⁹

Jareer al-Bajali advises 'Umar

It was narrated from 'Āṣim ibn Bahdalah, that one of the companions of 'Umar said: "We were with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when a man passed wind. The time for prayer came, and 'Umar said, 'I urge the one who passed wind to get up and do *wuḍoo*'. 'Jareer ibn 'Abdullāh said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, tell us all to get up and do *wuḍoo*', for that is more concealing.' So he did that."³³⁰

³²⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 2974; Muslim, hadith no. 1035.

³²⁹ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Ṣāliḥ 'Abdur-Raḥmān, p. 79.

³³⁰ *Ash-Shaykhān min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, p. 219.

A freed slave proposing marriage to a woman of Quraysh

'Umar (ﷺ) encouraged marriage between tribes as a means of creating friendship between them, until a freed slave proposed marriage to the sister of a man from Quraysh, and the Qurashi man refused the offer. 'Umar intervened and said: "What kept you from marrying your sister to him? He is a righteous man and is bringing to you the best of this world (wealth) and the best of the Hereafter (piety). Give your sister in marriage to him if she agrees." So he gave his sister to him in marriage.³³¹

3.1.3. Respect for 'Umar in the society, and his keenness to meet the people's needs

Respect for 'Umar in the society

'Umar had control over people's hearts and minds, and enjoyed a position of respect which kept people's whims and desires in check. The soundest evidence of that was when he dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed when he was at the peak of his fame and had achieved victory in every war, and was respected and admired a great deal. The order of his dismissal came at a time when the people were in the greatest need of him, when they were preparing to fight the Byzantines on the day of al-Yarmuk. Abu 'Ubaydah was appointed in charge of the army, and Khâlid said: "We hear and obey the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." When one of the soldiers suggested that *fitnah* might arise as the result of this change, Khâlid said, "There is no room for *fitnah* so long as 'Umar is in charge."³³² This is indicative of Khâlid's submission to the command of the caliph, although he was a well-loved and successful general, but he gave up that leadership role

³³¹ *Al-Murtada* by an-Nadawi, p. 106.

³³² *Ibid*, p. 107.

with humility the like of which has rarely been seen in the history of military leadership. It is also indicative of the authority of 'Umar who was in full control of affairs.³³³ He was deeply respected by the people. It was narrated that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said:

“ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) heard that men were speaking about a woman, so he sent for her. 'Umar was a man who was greatly respected, so when the message reached her, she said, 'What does 'Umar want from me?' She went out, although she had started labour, and when she passed by women they realized what was happening to her. Then she produced a boy who cried once and then died. News of that reached 'Umar, and he gathered the *Muhājireen* and Anṣār and consulted them. They said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you only wanted to discipline her, and you are in charge.' He said, 'And what do you say, O' So and so?' addressing a man who was at the back of the gathering. He said, 'I say, if the people said what they said to please you, then by Allah they have not been sincere with you. But if that was their honest opinion, then by Allah they are wrong, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' He then said, 'I urge you to go ahead and divide the *diyyah* among her people.' Al-Ḥasan was asked, 'Who was that man?' He answered, 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib.' ”³³⁴

'Ali, 'Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, az-Zubayr, 'Abdur-Raḥmān and Sa'd (may Allah be pleased with them all) gathered together, and 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf was the most outspoken of them with 'Umar. They said: "O' 'Abdur-Raḥmān, why don't you speak to *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* concerning the people? Sometimes one who is in need comes but his fear of 'Umar prevents him from speaking, and he goes back without having his need met." So he went to him and spoke to him about that, and he said, "O' 'Abdur-Raḥmān, I adjure you by

³³³ *Al-Murtaḍa* by an-Nadawī, p. 107.

³³⁴ *Manâqib 'Umar*, p. 135; *Marâseel al-Ḥasan; Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 1/273.

Allah, did 'Ali, 'Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, az-Zubayr and Sa'd, or some of them, tell you to say this?" He said, "Yes, by Allah." He said, "O' 'Abdur-Raḥmān, by Allah, I was kind to the people until I feared Allah because of being too kind, then I was harsh with them until I feared Allah because of being too harsh. What is the solution?" 'Abdur-Raḥmān got up, weeping and dragging his *izār*, and gesturing with his hand as if to say, "What a bad state they will be in after you are gone."³³⁵

It was narrated that 'Umar ibn Murrah said: "A man from Quraysh met 'Umar and said, 'Be kind to us, for you have filled our hearts with awe.' He asked, 'Is there any wrongdoing in that?' He said, 'No.' He said, 'Then may Allah increase me in awe in your hearts.'"³³⁶

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās said: "For one year I wanted to ask 'Umar about a verse, but I could not ask him because of the awe I felt."³³⁷

When he saw how much the people respected him, he said: "O' Allah, You know that I fear You more than they fear me."³³⁸

His keenness to meet people's needs

Ibn 'Abbās said: "Whenever 'Umar prayed, he would sit and meet with the people, and whoever had some need, he would try to help. Then he offered some prayers after which he did not sit (and meet with people). I came to the door and asked, 'O' Yarfā', is the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* ill?" He said, 'No.' Whilst I was like that, 'Uthmān came, and Yarfā' went in, then he came out to us and said,

³³⁵ *Ash-Shaykhān min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, p. 220.

³³⁶ *Manāqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 135; *Mahd as-Ṣawāb*, 1/273.

³³⁷ Muslim, *Kitāb at-Ṭalāq*, hadith no. 1479.

³³⁸ *Manāqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 134.

'Get up, O' son of 'Affān, get up, son of 'Abbās.' So we entered to meet 'Umar, and in front of him was piles of money. He said, 'I looked and I could not find anyone who knows more people in Madeenah than you two. Take this wealth and distribute it among the people. Then if there is anything left over, bring it back.' I knelt down and asked, 'If it is not enough, will you give us more?' He said, 'I already heard that from Akhzam.'³³⁹ Compare this with the story of Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions eating dried meat.' I said, 'If Allah had bestowed that upon him, he would have done something different from what you are doing.' He asked, 'What would he have done?' I said, 'He would have eaten and fed us.' He wept intensely, and said, 'I wish that I could get out of this affair (being caliph) without any gain or loss.'³⁴⁰

It was narrated that Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib said: "One of the camels of the booty got injured, so 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) slaughtered it and sent some of the meat to the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ), and cooked the rest. Then he called some of the Muslims to come and eat, among whom was al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib. Al-'Abbās said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, why don't you do this for us every day, so we can eat and chat with you?" 'Umar said, "I will never do it again. My two companions have passed on and they did certain things and followed a certain path. If I do something other than what they did I will end up on a path other than theirs."³⁴¹

It was narrated from Aslam the freed slave of 'Umar that 'Umar appointed a freed slave of his in charge of the *Himā*³⁴², and said: "O' Hunayy, do not do any harm to the Muslims and fear the

³³⁹ *Ash-Shaykhān fee Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, p. 221.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 222.

³⁴¹ *At-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/288; *ash-Shaykhān min al-Balādhuri*, p. 222.

³⁴² *Himā*: common land set aside for grazing.

prayer of the one who has been wronged, for it is answered. Only let in those who have sheep that are few in number and weak, and keep out the sheep of Ibn 'Awf and the sheep of Ibn 'Affân, for if their sheep die, they still have their farms and date palms, but if the sheep of one whose flocks are few in number and weak die, he will bring his children to me and will say, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*,' and do you think I am going to abandon them? Water and grass are easier for me than gold and silver. By Allah, it is their land; they fought for it during the *Jâhiliyah* and now that they have become Muslim, it is still their land. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, were it not that I need the money to spend it for the sake of Allah, I would not have made any *himâ* in their land, not even a handspan."³⁴³

It was narrated from Moosa ibn Anas ibn Mâlik that Sireen — the father of Muhammad ibn Sireen — asked Anas for a contract of manumission, as he had a lot of wealth, but he refused. He went to 'Umar, who said: "Give him a contract of manumission," but he refused. 'Umar hit him with his stick, whilst reciting the verse:

﴿And such of your slaves as seek a writing [of emancipation], give them such writing, if you find that there is good and honesty in them.﴾
(*Qur'an* 24: 33)

— then he gave him the contract of manumission.³⁴⁴

In this final story, we see a slave seeking his freedom, and a master who refuses to give it to him, and a ruler being fair by implementing the slave's wishes and ignoring the opinion of the master. Where can we find the like of such an action anywhere else in history?³⁴⁵

³⁴³ *Târeekh adh-Dhahabi*, 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen, p. 272.

³⁴⁴ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/975.

³⁴⁵ *Shaheed al-Mihrâb*, p. 222.

3.1.4. Disciplining some leaders of society

During his caliphate, 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) did not allow prominent individuals to control society or to wrong the people or feel superior to them in any way. There follow some examples:

Abu Sufiyân (رضي الله عنه) and his house in Makkah

'Umar came to Makkah and the people of Makkah came rushing to him. They said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, Abu Sufiyân has built a house and has blocked the water, so that now it runs through our houses and will destroy them. 'Umar went, carrying a stick, and found that Abu Sufiyân had set up some stones. He said, "Remove this," and he removed it. Then he said, "And (remove) this and this..." until several stones, five or six, had been removed. Then 'Umar turned to face towards the Ka'bah and said, "Praise be to Allah Who has made 'Umar give orders to Abu Sufiyân in the centre of Makkah and he obeys him."³⁴⁶

'Uyaynah ibn Ḥusn and Mâlik ibn Abi Zafar

'Uyaynah ibn Ḥusn visited 'Umar, with whom was Mâlik ibn Abi Zafar, one of the poor Muslims. 'Uyaynah overstepped the mark by saying: "The weak have become strong, the lowly have been raised in status." Mâlik said, "Is this man boasting to us when his ancestors are in Hell?" 'Umar got angry when 'Uyaynah objected to this retaliation and said to him, "Be humble in Islam, for by Allah I will not approve of you until Mâlik intercedes for you." So 'Uyaynah had no alternative but to ask Mâlik to intercede for him with 'Umar.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁶ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 321; *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 128.

³⁴⁷ *Târeekh al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah*, by Ibn Shihb, 2/690; *ad-Dawr al-Siyâsi* by aṣ-Ṣafwah, p. 191.

Al-Jarood and 'Ubayy ibn Ka'b
(may Allah be pleased with them both)

Al-Jarood came to 'Umar (ﷺ) and a man said: "This is the leader of Rabee'ah." 'Umar started hitting him with his stick and said, "I am afraid that it will affect you (your spiritual well-being)." 'Umar did the same thing with Ubayy ibn Ka'b, when he saw that the people had gathered around him and were asking him questions after he came out of the mosque. He said, "What you are doing is a *fitnah* for the leader and humiliation for the follower."³⁴⁸

3.1.5. His denunciation of certain behaviour in society

'Umar (ﷺ) lived his life in accordance with the wise laws of Allah, hence he did not approve of any deviant behaviour or any behaviour that would have a negative impact on the Muslim society. There follow some examples of incidents in which 'Umar brought those who were erring back to the straight path.

The slaughterhouse of az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awâm (ﷺ)

'Umar (ﷺ) used to go to the slaughterhouse of az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awâm, which was the only one in Madeenah, carrying his stick with him. If he saw a man buying meat for two days in a row, he would strike him with the stick and said: "Why don't you do without for the sake of your neighbour and cousin?"³⁴⁹

"Now ask for whatever you want"

'Umar (ﷺ) saw a beggar asking people (for charity), with a sack full of foodstuff on his back. He took the food and gave it to the

³⁴⁸ Op. cit., 2/690; *ad-Dawr as-Siyâsi* by aṣ-Ṣafwah, p. 191.

³⁴⁹ *Ad-Dawr as-Siyâsi* by aṣ-Ṣafwah, p. 231, quoting from *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi.

zakah camels, then he said to him, "Now ask for whatever you want."³⁵⁰

"Stop walking like that"

A man came swinging his arms and strutting, and 'Umar said to him: "Stop walking like that." He said, "I cannot." 'Umar whipped him, then he strutted, and he whipped him again and he stopped strutting. 'Umar said, "If I do not whip one like this then who should I whip?" The man came to him after that and said, "May Allah reward you with good; it was nothing but a *Shaytân* whom Allah sent away through you."³⁵¹

"Do not make our religion dead"

'Umar saw a man who looked as if he was dying because of his asceticism. He hit him with his stick and said: "Do not make our religion dead, may Allah kill you."³⁵²

It was narrated from ash-Shifa' bint 'Abdullâh that she saw some people who walked slowly and spoke slowly. She said: "Who are these?" They said, "Ascetics." She said, "By Allah, when 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb spoke, he could be heard, when he walked he walked fast, and when he hit he caused pain, and by Allah, he was a true ascetic."³⁵³

His concern for the people's health

The caliph 'Umar was concerned about the people's health. He would warn them against the consequences and dangers of being fat, and would advise them to lose weight, because that would give them strength to strive and enable them to fulfil their duties. He used to

³⁵⁰ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 101.

³⁵¹ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 175.

³⁵² *Ibid*, p. 190.

³⁵³ *Ash-Shaykhân min Riwayat al-Balâdhuri*, p. 226.

say: "O' people, beware of eating too much, for it makes you lazy in prayer, is bad for your body and causes sickness. Allah hates the fat man. Rather you should be moderate in your eating, for that is closer to righteousness and farther removed from extravagance, and makes one stronger to worship Allah. No person will be doomed unless he gives precedence to his desires over his religious commitment."³⁵⁴

Ibn al-Jawzi stated that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) saw a man with a huge belly and said: "What is this?" He said, "A blessing from Allah." He said, "Rather it is a punishment from Allah."³⁵⁵

With regard to his concern for the good health of the citizens, he used to forbid anyone who had a stomach disease to mix with the people, so as to prevent the spread of disease. He would advise the sick to stay at home until they got better. And it is narrated that he passed by a woman who had leprosy when she was on her way to the Ka'bah. He said to her: "O' female slave of Allah, why don't you stay in your home and not harm the people?" So she stayed home. Later on a man passed by her and said, "The one who told you (not to go out) has died, so go out." She said, "By Allah, I will not obey him whilst he is alive and disobey him when he is dead."³⁵⁶ He also used to emphasize the importance of exercise, horsemanship and horseback riding. He used to say: "Teach your children swimming and archery, and train them to be proficient on horseback, and teach them some beautiful poetry."³⁵⁷

'Umar's advice to the one who drank wine

'Umar asked about a man from Syria who was very strong (and whom he noticed was absent). It was said to him that he had

³⁵⁴ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq* by Dr. 'Abdur-Rahmân al-'Âni, p. 124.

³⁵⁵ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 200.

³⁵⁶ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq*, p. 124, quoting from *ar-Riyâḍ an-Nadrah*.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 125.

persisted in drinking alcohol. He said to his scribe to write:

"From 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to So and so. Peace be upon you. I praise Allah beside Whom there is no other god. In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿Hā. Meem. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.] The revelation of the Book [this Qur'an] is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower. The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance, the Severe in punishment, the Bestower [of favours]. *Lā ilāha illa Huwa* [none has the right to be worshipped but He], to Him is the final return.﴾

(*Qur'an* 40: 1-3)"

Then he sealed the letter and said to his messenger, "Do not give it to him except when he is sober." Then he commanded those who were with him to pray for his repentance. When the letter reached the man, he started to read it and said, "My Lord has promised to forgive me, and has warned me of His punishment," and he kept repeating it until he wept. Then he gave up wine and kept away from it. When 'Umar heard of that he said, "This is what you should do. If you see that one of you has slipped, correct him, pray for him and do not help the *Shayṭān* against him (by insulting him, etc.)."³⁵⁸

From this attitude we can see the genius in 'Umar's method of disciplining people and his knowledge of human nature and the ways of correcting people. What may benefit one person may harm another. This is an example of successful discipline and kind methods of correction. Despite all his huge responsibilities and preoccupations, the caliph noticed the absence of one who regularly attended his gatherings, and he did not ignore the matter, rather he asked about him so that he could deal with any problem that

³⁵⁸ *Tafseer al-Qurṭubī*, 15/256.

might need dealing with. Today a man may be absent and no one notices his brother's absence, let alone asking why he is absent and trying to help if necessary. This carelessness is one of the factors that has led to the collapse of Islamic brotherhood. This is not the way of Muslims who know that they are brothers. Will anyone pay attention? We hope so.³⁵⁹

'Umar's opinion on private gatherings

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was of the view that gatherings should be public and open to all people regardless of any differences in status. He disliked people having private gatherings, because that could lead to them developing different views which may result in the emergence of opposing factions.³⁶⁰

Ibn 'Abbās narrated that 'Umar said to some of Quraysh: "I have heard that you have gatherings. No two people should have a private gathering so that it is said that this person is the companion of So and so. So private gatherings should be avoided. By Allah this is harmful to your religious commitment, harmful to your honour and harmful to the unity between you. I can see that those who come after you will say, 'This is the opinion of So and so,' thus dividing Islam into factions. Make your gatherings open to everyone and sit together, for this will cause the love between you to last and will make you more respected among the people."³⁶¹

Indeed, when the elite keep away from the common people and choose only certain people to sit with, this causes a lot of benefits to be lost, because what is expected of the elite is that they should guide and direct the common people. Their meeting with the people is very beneficial, as it helps to transmit their view in an undistorted

³⁵⁹ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 208.

³⁶⁰ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon* by Ḥasan Ayyoob, p. 115.

³⁶¹ *Farā'id al-Kalām*, p. 116; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 3/281.

manner, free from any kind of contamination. Moreover, having too many different gatherings leads to a lot of opposing views on the issues that are discussed. This is what 'Umar feared for his people and for those who came after.³⁶²

3.2. His concern with checking on people's conduct in the marketplace (enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil)

Allah tells us that when He gave power in the land to the Companions of His Prophet (ﷺ), who had been expelled from their homes, they would do four things: establish prayer, pay zakah, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah.' For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely, have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His [Cause]. Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. Those [Muslim rulers] who, if We give them power in the land, [they] enjoin *Iqâmat aṣ-Ṣalâh* [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational *Ṣalâh* (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the Zakah and they enjoin *al-Ma'roof* [i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do], and forbid *al-Munkar* [i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden] [i.e. they make the Qur'an as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allah rests the end of [all] matters [of creatures].»

(Qur'an 22: 40-41)

³⁶² *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, by Ḥasan Ayyoob, p. 115.

Imam Abu Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ said in his commentary: "These are the attributes of the *Muhājireen*, because they are the ones who were expelled from their homes unjustly. Allah states that if He gave them power in the land, they would establish prayer, pay zakah, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. This is a description of the Rightly Guided Caliphs to whom Allah gave power in the land, namely Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them)."³⁶³

History bears witness, and it is narrated via the process of *tawātur*, that 'Umar did these things in the best possible way.³⁶⁴ He was concerned with the protection and development of the institutions of state serving the financial, judicial and military fields, as well as matters pertaining to the appointment of governors. He strove to make the people adhere to the command of Allah and the commands of His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and he strove to make the people avoid that which has been forbidden by Allah and by His Prophet (ﷺ), using his position as caliph of the Muslims, and through the governors of the provinces in the Muslim state. Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The main aim of the governor in any Muslim province is to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil."³⁶⁵

'Umar strove to defend the concept of *Tawḥeed* and to fight against deviation, to establish worship in the Muslim society, to fight evil, and to encourage good.

³⁶³ *Aḥkām al-Qur'an*, 3/246.

³⁶⁴ *Al-Ḥisbah fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, by Dr. Faḍl Ilāhi, p. 15.

³⁶⁵ *Al-Ḥisbah fee al-Islam*, p. 6; *as-Sulṭah at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/309.

3.2.1. The concept of *Tawḥeed* and opposing deviation and innovation

Because one of the aims of establishing an Islamic state is to protect religion, one of the most important things that 'Umar did to achieve this purpose was guarding the fundamentals of Islam by making the people adhere to the pure and sound belief (*'aqeedah*) with which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had left them, and fighting the specious arguments of deviants and the plots of the enemies of Islam who propagated deviant beliefs and myths which the *Shayṭān* made attractive to them so that they thought that they were doing well. There follow some examples of how 'Umar guarded the concept of *Tawḥeed* and strove against deviation:

The "Brides of the Nile"

'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ wrote to 'Umar telling him about an Egyptian custom whereby the people threw a young girl into the river every year. They said to him: "O' Governor, this Nile of our will not flow otherwise." He asked, "What do you mean?" They said, "When it is the twelfth of this month, we look for a virgin girl who is still with her parents, and we make a deal with her parents. Then we dress her in the finest jewellery and clothes, and throw her into this Nile." 'Amr said to them, "This cannot be allowed in Islam, for Islam erases what came before it." For a while, the Nile did not flow at all, and the people thought of migrating. Then 'Amr wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and told him of that. He wrote back saying, "You have done the right thing. I have sent you a piece of paper in this letter; throw it into the Nile." When his letter came, 'Amr took out the piece of paper, on which was written: "From the slave of Allah and *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* to the Nile of the people of Egypt. If the decision of flowing is up to you, then do not flow, for we have no need of you. But if you flow by the command of Allah, the One, the Subduer, Who is the One Who makes you flow, then we ask Allah to make you

flow." He threw the piece of paper into the Nile and when they woke up on Saturday, they found that Allah had caused the Nile to flow to a depth of sixteen cubits in a single night. Thus Allah put an end to this evil custom of the Egyptians.³⁶⁶

'Umar explained the meaning of *Tawḥeed* in this piece of paper and stated that the Nile only flowed by the will and decree of Allah. He proved to the people the falseness of their belief, which was deeply rooted in their hearts. Through his wise actions he eradicated this belief from the hearts of the Egyptians.³⁶⁷

"You are just a stone; you do not cause harm or bring benefit"

It was narrated from 'Ābis ibn Rabee'ah that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) came to the Black Stone and kissed it, then he said: "I know that you are just a stone; you do not cause harm or bring benefit. If I had not seen the Prophet kiss you, I would not have kissed you."³⁶⁸ This is following (the Sunnah) in the best sense.³⁶⁹ Ibn Ḥajar said that aṭ-Ṭabari said: "'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) only said that because the people had only recently given up idol worship, and he was afraid that the ignorant might think that acknowledging the stone was a kind of veneration of stones, which is what the Arabs used to do during the *Jāhiliyah*. 'Umar wanted it to be known that acknowledging the stone was following the action of the Prophet (ﷺ)." Then Ibn Ḥajar said: "These words of 'Umar represent submission to the Lawgiver in matters of religion, and following (the Sunnah) in the proper manner where the reason is not explained, which is an important principle in following the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) in matters where one does not know the

³⁶⁶ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/102-103. 'Ali aṭ-Ṭanṭāwī said: We have published it because it is so well known, not because it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³⁶⁷ *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 347.

³⁶⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 1597.

³⁶⁹ *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool*, 1/161.

wisdom behind it.”³⁷⁰ This attitude — following the Sunnah and being eager to do so — is one of the factors in the success of the *Ṣaḥābah*. They knew that it was essential to follow the Sunnah so that Allah would grant them help and support.³⁷¹

Cutting down the tree of ar-Riḍwân

Ibn Sa'd narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnaḍ from Nāfi' that 'Umar heard that some people were going to the tree of ar-Riḍwân and praying there. He warned them, then he ordered that it be cut down, and it was cut down.³⁷²

This was 'Umar's attitude in defending *Tawḥeed* and eradicating the causes of *fitnah* when those *Tābi'een* did something that the *Ṣaḥābah* had never done. This was an innovation which may have led to them worshipping that tree later on, so he ordered that it be cut down.³⁷³

The grave of Prophet Daniel (ﷺ)

When the grave of Prophet Daniel (ﷺ) was discovered in Tastar, Abu Moosa wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb about it. 'Umar wrote back telling him: “Dig up thirteen graves during the day, then bury him in one of them during the night and raze his grave, lest the people be tempted or confused by that.”³⁷⁴

“Do you want to take the places where your Prophet went as places of worship?”

It is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnaḍ that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) was on a journey and he saw people frequenting a place and praying there. He asked: “What is this?” They said, “A place where

³⁷⁰ *Fath al-Bâri*, 3/590, 591.

³⁷¹ *Min Akhlâq an-Naṣr fee Jeel aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, p. 23.

³⁷² *At-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 19, 20/160; *Ṭabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 2/100.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, 19, 20/260.

³⁷⁴ *Al-Fatâwa*, 15/90.

the Messenger of Allah prayed." He said, "Those who came before you were destroyed because of this. They took the places where their Prophets went as places of worship. If a person is there when the time for prayer comes, let him pray, otherwise let him move on."³⁷⁵

*"I want them to know that Allah is the One
Who does what He will"*

When 'Umar dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed from the leadership of the army in Syria, there was no reason for that other than the general interests of the ummah. 'Umar was afraid that the people were too attached to Khâlid and believed that victory was connected to Khâlid's blessing and military expertise, and that they would put their trust in that. He wanted them to know that Allah is the One Who grants victory and that He does whatever He will. So he issued his command to dismiss him, and confirmed that in a letter in which he explained his decision, and he sent copies of this letter to all his governors, striving to reinforce the concept of *Tawhêd*. In this letter he said: "I am not dismissing Khâlid out of anger or betrayal, rather the people have become confused because of him"³⁷⁶, and I want them to know that Allah is the One Who does what He will."³⁷⁷

*"Those who put their trust in Allah are
those who sow seed in the ground"*

It was narrated from Mu'âwiyah ibn Qarrah that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) met some people from Yemen and asked: "Who are you?" They said, "We are *al-mutawakkiloon* (those who put their trust in Allah). He said, "No, you are *al-muttakiloon* (those who expect others to do things for you). Those who put their trust in Allah

³⁷⁵ *Al-Fatâwa*, 10/235.

³⁷⁶ i.e., because they were starting to attribute victory to him and not to Allah. [Translator]

³⁷⁷ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/82.

are those who sow seed in the ground and put their trust in Allah.”³⁷⁸

“We follow and do not innovate”

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said on the *minbar*: “Those who follow their own personal views and opinions are the enemies of Sunnah. They failed to memorize hadith so they give *fatwas* based on their own opinions. They have gone astray and led others astray. But we are those who follow and do not innovate. We will not go astray so long as we adhere to the Sunnah.”

It was narrated from ‘Amr ibn Maymoon that his father said: “A man came to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said, ‘O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, when we conquered al-Madā’in we found a book in which were some amazing words.’ He said, ‘From the Book of Allah?’ He said, ‘No.’ He called for his stick and started hitting him with it and reciting the words:

Alif-Lām-Râ. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.] These are the Verses of the Clear Book [the Qur’an that makes clear the legal and illegal things, legal laws, a guidance and a blessing]. Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an in order that you may understand. We relate unto you [Muhammad] the best of stories through Our Revelations unto you, of this Qur’an. And before this [i.e. before the coming of Divine Revelation to you], you were among those who knew nothing about it [the Qur’an].» *(Qur’an 12: 1-3)*

Then he said, ‘Those who came before you were destroyed because they turned to the books of their scholars and bishops, and ignored the Torah and Gospel, until they were neglected and the knowledge in them was lost.’”³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ *Ashāb ar-Rasool*, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* (1/164).

³⁷⁹ There is some weakness in this report because of interruptions in its=

It was narrated that Aslam said: "I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) say, 'Why do we run fast (in *ṭawāf* and *sā'i*) now? Despite that we will not give up something that we used to do at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).'"³⁸⁰

It was narrated from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that 'Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn (ؓ) entered *iḥrām* from Baṣra and came to 'Umar, who spoke harshly to him and told him not to do that, and said: "Do you want the people to say that a man from among the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) entered *iḥrām* from one of the regions?"³⁸¹

It was narrated that Abu Wā'il³⁸² said: "I was sitting on the chair of Shaybah ibn 'Uthmān³⁸³ at the Ka'bah, and he said, "'Umar sat here and said, 'I thought of not leaving any gold or silver without sharing it out.' I said, 'You would not do that.' He asked, 'Why not?' I said, 'Your two companions did not do that.' He said, 'They are the two men whose example I should follow.'"³⁸⁴

There follow some examples of how 'Umar sought to preserve the concept of *Tawḥeed* and fight against innovation. He understood *Tawḥeed* as taught by Islam and acted in accordance with it. He was keen to eradicate all traces of idolatry from people's hearts and souls, and he established the pillars of *Tawḥeed* in human consciousness.³⁸⁵ 'Umar strove to instill faith, with all its pillars, deeply in Muslim society and strove against *shirk* in all its types and subtle forms. He

=isnad. *Manāqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 23. There are other isnads which strengthen it.

³⁸⁰ *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb*, 2/532.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² i.e., Shaqeeq ibn Salamah.

³⁸³ Shaybah ibn 'Uthmān ibn Abi Ṭalḥah al-Qurashi al-'Abdari, the doorkeeper of the Ka'bah.

³⁸⁴ *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb*, 2/537; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³⁸⁵ *Ashhar Mashāheer al-Islām* by Rafeeq al-'Adhm, 2/256, 257.

strove against innovation and followed the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in his words and deeds. These principles form part of knowing the causes of victory which 'Umar understood and lived by in this world.

3.2.2. His concern with different aspects of worship

'Umar understood from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) that all issues of religion come under the heading of worship and religion is the way established by Allah to cover all aspects of life and organize all its affairs, from the etiquette of eating, drinking and relieving oneself to the establishment of the state, rulership, financial policies, interactions, punishments and international relations in peacetime and wartime. He understood that the rituals of worship, such as prayer, fasting, zakah and Hajj, have an important status, but that is not the full picture of worship, rather that is just a part of the worship that Allah wants.³⁸⁶ The implementation of this concept of worship in this world is one of the conditions of being given power in the land. Worship also plays an important role in people's lives by strengthening their beliefs and establishing moral values, as well as reforming society. There follow some examples of 'Umar's concern with the rituals of prayer, zakah, hajj, fasting and *dhikr*, and his eagerness to fulfil the meanings of worship in himself and in the Muslim society.

Prayer

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to enjoin the Muslims to pray and he emphatically denounced those who did not attend prayers in congregation. Abu Bakr followed his example, and when 'Umar became caliph he paid attention to the matter of prayer and made them pray, and punished those who did not pray. He wrote to his

³⁸⁶ *Fiqh at-Tamkeen fee al-Qur'an al-Kareem* by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, p. 181.

governors saying: “One of the most important issues in my view is the prayer. Whoever prays regularly and takes care of the matter and focuses in prayer has protected his religious commitment and is doing well, but whoever neglects it is more likely to neglect other religious obligations too.”³⁸⁷

He was very keen on proper focus and humility (*khushoo*) in prayer. It was narrated that ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: “I prayed behind ‘Umar, and I could hear his weeping from three rows back.”³⁸⁸ According to another report, he recited,

﴿...I only complain of my grief and sorrow to Allah...﴾ (*Qur’an* 12: 86) — in *Fajr* prayer, and wept until his sobbing could be heard in the last row.³⁸⁹

He said to one who fidgeted during the prayer: “If one’s heart was properly focused, his limbs would be too.”³⁹⁰ If news from the army was delayed, he would pray *Qunoot*³⁹¹, and he would pray for the *Mujāhideen* in his prayer and would pray *Qunoot* for them. When he fought the People of the Book, he would pray *Qunoot* against them in the obligatory prayers.³⁹² He would train the people and himself to pay attention to the matter of prayer, both obligatory and Sunnah prayers, and he would teach the people to follow the Sunnah and warn them against innovation. When he was late for *Maghrib* prayer because of something that kept him busy until the stars came out, he freed two slaves after the prayer.³⁹³ He thought that joining

³⁸⁷ *Al-Fatāwa*, 10/249; *al-Muwatta’a* ma’a Sharhihi *Awjāz al-Masālik*, 1/154.

³⁸⁸ *Hilyah al-Awliya*, 1/52.

³⁸⁹ *Al-Fatāwa*, 10/374.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 18/154.

³⁹¹ *Ibid*, 23/62.

³⁹² *Ibid*, 21/91.

³⁹³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi* by al-Ḥameedi, 19, 20/42, quoting from *Tāreekh Dimashq*.

two prayers with no excuse was a major sin, and he would rebuke those who prayed after *'Aṣr*.³⁹⁴

He would rebuke those who came late for *Jumu'ah* prayer. It was narrated from Sâlim ibn 'Abdullâh and from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar that whilst 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was standing delivering the *khuṭbah* one Friday, a man from among the earliest *Muhâjireen*, one of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), came in. 'Umar called out to him: "What time is it?" He said, "I was busy then I came home until I heard the *adhân*. As soon as I heard it, I did *wuḍoo*.'" 'Umar said, "Only *wuḍoo*?' I know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to enjoin *ghusl*."³⁹⁵

'Umar forbade the raising of voices in the mosque. It was narrated that as-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed said: "I was standing in the mosque and a man threw stones at me. I looked and saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. He said, 'Go and bring those two men to me.' So I brought them and he said, 'Who are you (or where are you from)?' They said, 'We are from at-Tâ'if.' He said, 'If you had been locals I would have beaten you severely for raising your voices in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).'"³⁹⁶

'Umar used to respect the commands of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was narrated that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «'If the wife of any one of you asks permission to go to the mosque, do not forbid her.'» He said, 'The wife of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb used to pray in the mosque and he said to her, 'You know what I like.' She said, 'By Allah, I will not stop unless you forbid me'.' He said, 'When 'Umar was stabbed, she was

³⁹⁴ *Al-Fatâwa*, 21/98, 22/23.

³⁹⁵ *Al-Fath*, 2/415, 430; *al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 294, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya.

³⁹⁶ *Al-Fath*, 1/668.

in the mosque.'”³⁹⁷ This report indicates that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) respected the commands of shari'ah and adhered to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), because he gave precedence to that over what he himself preferred.³⁹⁸

'Umar loved to pray in the middle of the night, and he would pray as much as Allah willed, then at the end of the night he would wake his family and say, “Prayer, prayer!” and recite this verse:

﴿And enjoin *aṣ-Ṣalâh* [the prayer] on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e. the *Ṣalâh* (prayers)]. We ask not of you a provision [i.e. to give Us something: money]: We provide for you. And the good end [i.e. Paradise] is for the *Muttaqoon* [the pious].﴾

(*Qur'an* 20: 132)³⁹⁹

One night he prayed *qiyâm* and felt very distressed thinking about the people. He could not pray and he could not go to sleep, so he said: “By Allah, I cannot pray and I cannot sleep. I start reciting and I do not know if I am at the beginning of the recitation or at the end.” When he was asked, “Why is that, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?” he said, “Because of my worrying about the people.”⁴⁰⁰

He would make up what he missed of *qiyâm al-layl* the next day. He narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Whoever missed anything of his wird at night, and recites it between *Fajr* and *Dhuhr*, it will be as if he recited it at night.”»⁴⁰¹

He wished that he could be a *mu'adh-dhin*, and said: “If I were able to give the *adhân* as well as be the caliph, I would do so.”⁴⁰²

³⁹⁷ Bukhari, hadith no. 865.

³⁹⁸ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19, 20/40.

³⁹⁹ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/635; its isnad is *ḍa'eef*.

⁴⁰⁰ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar* by ash-Sharqâwi, p. 214.

⁴⁰¹ Muslim, hadith no. 747.

⁴⁰² *Ash-Shaykhân min Riwâyat al-Balâdhuri*, p. 225.

He made *du'â* and beseeched Allah a great deal. One of the things he said in his *du'â* was: "O' Allah, make all my deeds righteous and make them purely for Your sake, and do not let me associate anyone else with You in them."⁴⁰³

Another of his *du'â* was: "O' Allah, if You have decreed that I am doomed, erase it and decree that I be blessed, for You erase and affirm whatever You will."⁴⁰⁴ And he used to say: "I am not worried about a response, I am worried about making *du'â*. If I am inspired to make *du'â* then the response will come with it."⁴⁰⁵

He would encourage people to be close to those who were obedient and he would say: "Get close to those who are obedient and listen to what they say, for they have a clear vision of things."⁴⁰⁶

'Umar (ؓ) loved to be reminded of Allah, and he would say to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ؓ): "O' Abu Moosa, remind us of our Lord," so he would recite and 'Umar and those who were with him would listen and weep.⁴⁰⁷

He loved to sit with the people of *dhikr*. It was narrated that Abu Sa'eed, the freed slave of Abu Usayd, said: " 'Umar used to check in the mosque after *'Isha*', and if he saw someone he would make him leave, unless the man was standing and praying. Then he passed by a group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), among whom was Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and he asked: "Who are these?" He said, "A group of your people, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "What kept you after the prayer?" They said, "We sat to remember Allah." So he sat with them, then he said to the one who

⁴⁰³ *Al-Fatâwa*, 1/232.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 14/275.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 8/118.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 15/60.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 10/51.

was closest to him, "Start making *du'ā*." So he made *du'ā*, and he asked them to do that, one by one, until he came to me, and I was next to him. He said, "Come on," and I did not know what to say and I started trembling. He said, "Speak, even if you only say, O' Allah forgive us, O' Allah have mercy on us." Then 'Umar started to make *du'ā* and no one shed more tears or wept more than him. Then he said, "Now depart."⁴⁰⁸

Tarâweeh

The first one who gathered the people to pray *Tarâweeh* was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), and he wrote to the other regions telling them to do likewise. The reason for that was that 'Umar came out to the mosque one night in Ramaḍān and he saw the people in scattered groups, one man praying by himself and a group of men following one man in prayer. 'Umar said: "I think that if I unite them behind one reader it will be better." Then he decided to unite them behind Ubayy ibn Ka'b. The narrator, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Abdul-Qāri, said: "Then I went out with him one night and the people were praying behind their reader. 'Umar said, 'What a good innovation this is, but the prayer that they sleep and miss is better than what they are doing' — meaning at the end of the night, because the people used to pray *qiyām* at the beginning of the night."⁴⁰⁹

No one should think that *Tarâweeh* was introduced by 'Umar, or that he was the first one to introduce it. Rather it was introduced at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), but 'Umar was the first one to unite the people behind a single reader, because they used to pray by themselves, but he united them behind a single reader.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁸ *Ash-Shaykhān min Riwāyat al-Balādhuri*, p. 236.

⁴⁰⁹ Bukhari, hadith no. 2010.

⁴¹⁰ *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb*, 1/349.

As for the evidence that its origins lay in the teaching of the Prophet (ﷺ) — he (ﷺ) used to urge the people to pray *qiyâm* during the month of Ramaḍân and he said: "Whoever spends the nights of Ramaḍân in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven him."⁴¹¹

It was narrated from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr that:

"«'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) told him that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out one night in the middle of the night, and prayed in the mosque, and some men followed his prayer. The next day the people started talking about that, and more people gathered and prayed with him (that night). The next day, word spread further and there were more people in the mosque on the third night. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came out and the people followed his prayer. On the fourth night, there were so many people that the mosque could not hold them all, but he did not come out until it was time for *Fajr* prayer. After he had finished praying *Fajr*, he turned to the people and bore witness (that there is no god but Allah), then he said, 'I appreciate what you did, but I was afraid that it may be made obligatory for you and you would not be able to do it.' Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when that was still the situation.»"⁴¹²

As for 'Umar's saying, "What a good innovation this is," he called it an innovation (*bid'ah*) but that was *bid'ah* in the linguistic sense, because everything that is done without precedent is called a *bid'ah* in Arabic.⁴¹³ What 'Umar did, uniting the people behind one Imam in *Tarâweeh* prayer and issuing instructions to the provinces to do the same, is indicative of his love and keenness for organization.

⁴¹¹ Bukhari, hadith no. 2009.

⁴¹² Ibid, hadith no. 2012.

⁴¹³ *Al-Fatâwa*, 31/23.

Zakah, Ḥajj and Ramaḍān

'Umar was concerned with zakah and the organization of this obligatory duty, which became one of the sources of the state's income. We will discuss this duty when we speak of the financial institutions *insha' Allāh*.

With regard to Ḥajj, 'Umar used to do Ḥajj with the people throughout his caliphate. It was said that 'Umar did Ḥajj for ten years — i.e., throughout the duration of his entire caliphate — or that he did Ḥajj for nine years thereof.⁴¹⁴ Among the duties of the caliph or those whom he appoints as his representatives in other provinces are the following:

- ❖ Making the people aware of the time for Ḥajj and going out to the holy places
- ❖ Teaching them the rituals according to shari'ah
- ❖ Leading the rituals of Ḥajj as prescribed
- ❖ Leading them in the prayers and delivering the *khuṭbahs* prescribed in shari'ah.⁴¹⁵

'Umar (ﷺ) encouraged the people to do Ḥajj and enjoined that upon them. He said: "I thought of sending men to these regions to see if there was anyone who could afford it but had not done Ḥajj, then they could impose the *jizyah* on them."⁴¹⁶

And he strove hard to ensure that there would be people around the Ka'bah at times other than the months of Ḥajj, because at the time of Abu Bakr, the people would frequent the Ka'bah during the months of Ḥajj and then forsake it for the rest of the year, and they

⁴¹⁴ *As-Sulṭah at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/382.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid*, 1/383.

⁴¹⁶ *Farā'id al-Kalām*, p. 173.

did not come from their regions to do 'Umrah. So the Ka'bah became devoid of people from the regions throughout the year. So 'Umar enjoined them to do that which was better for them, by doing 'Umrah at times other than the months of Ḥajj. Thus the Ka'bah became frequented and visited during the months of Ḥajj and during other months. What 'Umar chose for them was better, even according to those who say that *tamattu'* is better than *ifrâd* and *qirân*, such as Imam Aḥmad and others.⁴¹⁷ It is narrated that he used to donate the cover of the Ka'bah every year and divide it among the pilgrims.⁴¹⁸

With regard to fasting, 'Umar followed the method of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was proven that he broke his fast on a cloudy day, then the sun came out and 'Umar said: "It is not serious and we did our best to work it out."⁴¹⁹

When 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) heard that a man was fasting for a lifetime (*ad-dahr* — i.e., every single day), he started saying, "Eat, O Dahri."⁴²⁰

He used to strive very hard in worship; he prayed a great deal and fasted a great deal, especially at the end of his life. He gave a great deal of charity and when he became caliph he did Ḥajj every year. In jihad he fought alongside the Prophet (ﷺ) in all the major battles, and he fought after he died. He will have the reward for all the battles and campaigns that took place during his caliphate, because he was the one who set them in motion.⁴²¹

He was also one of the people of *dhikr*. It was narrated that he said: "You must remember Allah, for *dhikr* is a healing; and beware

⁴¹⁷ *Al-Fatâwa*, 26/146, 147.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid*, 31/14.

⁴¹⁹ *Al-Muwatta'*, 1/303; quoting from *al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 330.

⁴²⁰ *Al-Fath*, 4/261.

⁴²¹ *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 2/367.

of mentioning people in their absence, for it is a disease.”⁴²² And he used to say: “Take your share of isolation.”⁴²³

3.2.3. His concern with markets and trade

‘Umar was keen to check on those who were dealing in the markets and to make them do their dealings in accordance with shari‘ah. He would appoint someone else in charge of the market. ‘Umar appointed as-Sâ‘ib ibn Yazeed (ؓ) in charge of the market of Madeenah, and ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Utbah ibn Mas‘ood and others.⁴²⁴ The researcher will notice that the system of *ḥisbah* (checking on the market) in the Islamic state developed in accordance with the principles of shari‘ah and developed alongside the Muslim society until it became one of the public offices of Islam, with conditions that must be fulfilled by the one who holds this post, conditions which must be met by the one who is to be checked and conditions which must be met in the types of business to be checked.⁴²⁵

It is known that ‘Umar (ؓ) was deeply concerned with accountability in the marketplace. He used to walk around in the market, carrying his stick with which he would discipline anyone who deserved that. It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik (ؓ) said: “I saw ‘Umar wearing an *izâr* with fourteen patches, some of which were of leather, and he was not wearing a shirt or cloak; he was wearing a turban and carrying his stick, walking around in the market of Madeenah.”⁴²⁶ Al-Ḥâfidh adh-Dhahabi narrated that Qatâdah said: “When ‘Umar was caliph, he used to wear a *jubbah* which was

⁴²² *Tafseer al-Qurṭubi*, 16/336; *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 2/677.

⁴²³ *Az-Zuhd* by Wakee‘, 2/517; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

⁴²⁴ *Al-Sulṭah at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/408.

⁴²⁵ *Ar-Riqâbah al-Mâliyah fee al-Islâm*, by Dr. ‘Awf al-Kafrâwi, p. 66.

⁴²⁶ *At-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/330.

patched, and some of the patches were leather. He would go around in the market with a stick on his shoulder, with which he would discipline the people.”⁴²⁷

Imam Muslim narrated that Mâlik ibn Aws ibn al-Ḥadathân said: “I went around in the market saying, ‘Who has *dirhams* for exchange?’ Ṭalhah ibn ‘Ubaydullâh (ؓ), who was with ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ؓ) said, ‘Show us your gold, then come later when our servants are here and we will give you your silver.’ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ؓ) said, ‘No; by Allah you will give him his silver now or you will return his gold to him, for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «‘Silver for silver is *riba* unless it is exchanged hand to hand, gold for gold is *riba* unless it is exchanged hand to hand, wheat for wheat is *riba* unless it is exchanged hand to hand; barley for barley is *riba* unless it is exchanged hand to hand, dates for dates is *riba* unless they are exchanged hand to hand.’»”⁴²⁸

One day ‘Umar saw a man who had diluted milk with water to sell it, so he spilled it out.⁴²⁹

‘Umar prevented hoarding in the Muslim markets. He asked Ḥaṭīb ibn Abi Balta‘ah: “How do you sell, O’ Ḥaṭīb?” He said, “Two *mudds* (for one *dirham*).” He said, “You go and buy (from incoming merchants) at out gates, courtyards and markets, and you take it away from us and sell it however you wish. Sell a *ṣâ‘* (for one *dirham* — a *ṣâ‘* equals four *mudds*) — otherwise do not come to our market; go and travel in the land and bring what you want, then sell as you wish.”⁴³⁰

⁴²⁷ *Târeekh al-Islâm, ‘Ahd ar-Râshideen*, p. 268.

⁴²⁸ Muslim, hadith no. 1586.

⁴²⁹ *Al-Ḥisbah fee al-Islâm* by Ibn Taymiyah, p. 60; *al-Ḥisbah* by Dr. Faḍl Ilâhi, p. 24.

⁴³⁰ *Mawsoo‘at Fiqh ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Qal‘aji, p. 28.

One day ‘Umar went out to the marketplace and saw some people hoarding because they had extra gold. ‘Umar said, “Not even for an instant. Allah sends us provision, then when it comes to our marketplace some people hoard it because they have extra gold, and keep it from widows and orphans, then when the importers have left, they sell it according to what they decide. But anyone who brings goods to the marketplace winter and summer is a guest of ‘Umar; let him sell whatever he wants and keep whatever he wants.”

It was narrated that Muslim ibn Jundub said: “Some foodstuff came to Madeenah and the people of the market went to buy it. ‘Umar said to them, ‘Do you want to do business in our market? Then you must either let other people take part in this, or go out and buy it then come and sell it.’”⁴³¹

‘Umar did not limit his ban to the hoarding of food for people and animals, rather he applied that to everything by the unavailability of which people may be harmed. Mālik narrated in *al-Muwattaʿ* that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: “There is to be no hoarding in our marketplace. No rich people should hoard the provision of Allah that has come to our market and keep it from us. But anyone who brings goods to the marketplace winter and summer is a guest of ‘Umar; let him sell whatever he wants and keep whatever he wants.”⁴³²

The texts mentioned above show that the reason for hoarding is so that one can control the prices, which adversely affects the poor, widows and orphans. This is clear from what ‘Umar said to Ḥaṭīb ibn Abi Balta‘ah — who used to sell two *mudds* for one *dirham*: “You go and buy (from incoming merchants) at out gates, courtyards and markets, and you take it away from us and sell it however you wish. Sell a *ṣāʿ* (for one *dirham* — a *ṣāʿ* equals four *mudds*).” And he said

⁴³¹ *Mawsooʿat Fiqh ‘Umar*, p. 28.

⁴³² *Ibid*, p. 29.

to the people in the marketplace who hoarded goods: "Allah sends us provision, then when it comes to our marketplace some people hoard it because they have extra gold, and keep it from widows and orphans, then when the importers have left, they sell it according to what they decide." He rebuked them sternly for that.⁴³³

'Umar would intervene to impose a suitable price for essential commodities, when such intervention was necessary to protect the consumers and merchants. A man brought some olive oil which he began to sell in the market for a price other than that which people usually paid. 'Umar said to him: "Either sell it at the market price or leave our market, for we will not force you to stick to a price." And he made him leave.⁴³⁴

*Obliging merchants to know what is
ḥalāl and ḥarām in buying and selling*

'Umar (ؓ) would beat with his stick anyone who sat in the market and did not know the rulings. He said: "No one should sit in our market who does not know what *riba* is."⁴³⁵ He would walk around in the market and hit some merchants with his stick and say: "No one who should sell in our marketplace except one who has understanding of the rules of Islam, otherwise he is going to consume *riba* whether he wants to or not."⁴³⁶

No aspect of running the state took more of 'Umar's attention at the expense of another, for the ruler should not lose balance. 'Umar set out guidelines for the merchants which were suited to the market, to regulate exchanges and guarantee stability in the market. There

⁴³³ Op. cit., p. 29.

⁴³⁴ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah*, 2/749; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 177.

⁴³⁵ *Nidhām al-Hukoomah al-Islāmiyah* by al-Katāni, 2/17.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

were to be no bad deals, cheating or hoarding, no black market and no ignorance of what is and is not permitted in the world of trade. He issued a brief and comprehensive decree that put an end to all corruption and regulated everything: "Whoever does not have an understanding of the rules of Islam should not deal in our market."⁴³⁷

This is akin to the issuing of laws nowadays, such as the rule that no one should undertake a certain job unless he has a certificate or licence in such and such a field.⁴³⁸ States nowadays organize and supervise the markets by setting up chambers of commerce and the like to regulate the marketplace and put the public's mind at rest. 'Umar had the distinction of being the first to do that; he did not leave the marketplace in chaos, rather he appointed supervisors to watch over it and keep it in order. He appointed Sulaymān ibn Ḥaṭhamah in charge of the markets; he appointed as-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed as his agent in charge of the market of Madeenah, along with 'Abdullāh ibn 'Utbah ibn Mas'ood. So there was a supervisor in charge of all markets, then each market had its own supervisor. It is certain that this attention to the organization of markets played a great role in relieving people of a great deal of hardship in getting what they needed. If the ruler pays due attention to this matter, he will be rewarded by Allah. 'Umar's good actions prove that Islam is suited to all times and all places throughout the world; it motivates backward nations to advance and keeps advanced nations from declining and collapsing. It does not block the way for those who want to advance and it does not leave the negligent to get carried away in their negligence.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁷ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 209.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid, p. 210.

'Umar commands the people to work hard and encourages them to earn a living

'Umar used to urge the people to work hard and earn a living. It was narrated from Muhammad ibn Sireen that his father said: "I attended *Maghrib* with 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb. He came to me and I had a small pile of clothes. He asked, 'What is this you have?' I said, 'Some clothes. I come to this market and buy and sell.' He said, 'O' Quraysh, do not let this one and others like him control trade, for it is one-third of leadership.'"

It was also narrated that al-Hasan said that 'Umar said:

"Whoever tries to trade in something three times and cannot make any money out of it, let him move on to something else."⁴⁴⁰

'Umar said: "Learn a profession, for soon one of you will need a profession."⁴⁴¹

And he said: "Were it not for this buying and selling, you would soon become dependent on people."⁴⁴²

And he said: "Earning in which there is some menial work is better than begging from people."⁴⁴³

And he said: "If one of you wants to buy a camel, let him choose one that is big and fat. Then if he does not benefit from it, he can still sell it and make a profit."

And he said: "O' poor people, lift up your heads and engage in trade, for the way is clear, and do not be dependent on people."⁴⁴⁴

And he also said: "No one of you should refrain from earning a living and say, 'O' Allah grant me provision,' when he knows that the sky

⁴⁴⁰ *Nidhâm al-Hukoomah an-Nabawiyah*, 2/20.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 129; *Tanbeeh al-Ghâfileen*, p. 211, by as-Samarqandi.

will not rain down gold and silver, and that Allah grants provision to people by means of one another.'” Then he recited the verse:

«Then when the [*Jumu'ah*] *Ṣalāh* [prayer] is ended, you may disperse through the land, and seek the Bounty of Allah [by working], and remember Allah much, that you may be successful.»

(*Qur'an* 62: 10)⁴⁴⁵

If 'Umar saw a young man and liked him, he would ask: “Does he have a skill?” If the answer was no, he would say, “I am no longer impressed.”⁴⁴⁶ And he said: “There is no situation in which I would like to die, apart from jihad for the sake of Allah, more than if death were to come to me when I was travelling with my camels (for the purpose of trade), seeking provision by the bounty of Allah.” And he recited the verse:

«... Others travelling through the land, seeking of Allah's Bounty.»

(*Qur'an* 73: 20)⁴⁴⁷

*'Umar's fear that prominent Muslims
would give up trading*

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) entered the marketplace during his caliphate and he saw that the majority of traders were Nabataeans. This upset him, so when he had gathered the people together he told them about that and rebuked them for abandoning the market. They said: “Allah has made us independent of the market by means of the conquests that He has granted to us.” 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: “By Allah, if you carry on like that, your men will need their men and your women will need their women.”⁴⁴⁸ 'Umar regarded the prominent Muslims'

⁴⁴⁵ *Nidhām al-Hukoomah al-Islāmiyah*, 2/20.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid, 2/18.

— apart from the *Mujâhideen* — shunning of the marketplace and failure to strive to earn a living with suspicion and fear.⁴⁴⁹

3.2.4. 'Umar's night patrols

There can be no doubt that the night patrols (*al-'asas*) formed the basis for the police. Some historians have stated that 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (ؓ) was in charge of the night patrols at the time of Abu Bakr, and that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb took charge of the night patrols himself. He used to bring his freed slave Aslam with him, and sometimes he would bring 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf with him. Night patrols refers to going around at night and keeping a lookout for thieves and evildoers and others whose evil is feared. We should rightfully regard this as the first step in the establishment of the police force, because the believers used to guard themselves and prevent evil amongst themselves during the day, then when they went to sleep the night patrol took over the task of guarding them. Then when the numbers of evildoers increased and they began to commit evil openly in broad daylight, there was a need for guards to keep a lookout during the day too, so the police force was established as a permanent patrol.⁴⁵⁰

'Umar himself used to guard the Muslims, and that helped keep him up to date with what was happening in the Muslim society. In the city of the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) — which at that time was the capital of the Islamic state, a meeting place for all peoples and the seat of government — he would walk in the streets at night to see and hear for himself what his agents might hesitate to tell him or what they might fail to pass on to him. How many rules he laid down, altered or abolished according to the

⁴⁴⁹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 161.

⁴⁵⁰ *'Abqarat al-Islâm fee Uṣool al-Ḥukam*, p. 322.

situation. There follow some examples which point to what we have mentioned.⁴⁵¹

Prohibition on hastening to wean infants

It was narrated that Aslam, the freed slave of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) said: "Some merchants came to Madeenah and camped in the prayer-place. 'Umar said to 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, 'Shall we go and guard them tonight?' He said, 'Yes.' So they guarded them overnight. They prayed and 'Umar heard a child crying. He went towards him and said to his mother, 'Fear Allah and look after your child.' Then he went back to his place. At the end of the night, he heard the child crying again, so he went to his mother and said to her, 'Woe to you, what a bad mother you are! Why has your child not stopped crying all night?' She said, 'O' slave of Allah, I am distracting him from nursing but he refuses to accept that.' He said, 'Why?' She said, 'Because 'Umar does not give a stipend except to children who are weaned.' 'Umar had allocated a stipend to every child who was weaned. He said, 'How old is this son of yours?' She said, 'So many months.' He said, 'Woe to you, do not hasten to wean him.' When he prayed *Fajr*, the people could not hear his recitation clearly because of his weeping. He said, 'Woe to 'Umar, how many of the Muslims' children has he killed?' Then he ordered a caller to cry out: 'Do not hasten to wean your children, for we will give a stipend to every child born in Islam,' and he wrote instructions to that effect to all regions."⁴⁵²

What a beautiful story this is, and how great was his justice. Thus every newborn was recorded in the state records and allocated a stipend from the *bayt al-māl* of the Muslims, because the *bayt al-māl* belongs to all the Muslims, and the one who is in charge of it is a

⁴⁵¹ *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 264.

⁴⁵² *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/140.

trustee and it is not permissible for him to dispose of any of it unlawfully or to withhold anything from one who is entitled to it.

*Setting a limit on how long soldiers
can be away from their wives*

One of the results of 'Umar's night patrols was that he went out one night to patrol Madeenah and he heard a woman in great distress saying in verse:

"This night is too long and I cannot go to sleep for I have no one to sleep with,

By Allah, were it not for Allah I would have made this bed shake."⁴⁵³

'Umar said: "May Allah have mercy on you." Then he sent her some clothing and money, and wrote a letter telling her husband to come to her.⁴⁵⁴

According to another report: Then he went and knocked on his daughter Hafṣah's door. She said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, what brings you here at this hour?" He said, "O' my daughter, how long can a woman put up with her husband being away?" She said, "She can put up with a month or two or three, but in the fourth month she will lose patience." 'Umar wrote that the soldiers should not be kept away for more than four months.⁴⁵⁵ This was how 'Umar set a limit on how long a soldier could be away from his wife, and no one disputed with him concerning that.⁴⁵⁶

As for the soldiers who did not adhere to this limit, 'Umar checked on them before setting a limit. After he found out the names

⁴⁵³ *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawāb*, 1/388; there is a break in its isnad.

⁴⁵⁴ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 890.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 89; *Awwalīyāt al-Fârooq*, p. 289.

⁴⁵⁶ *Awwalīyāt al-Fârooq*, p. 289.

of those who had been away for a long time and had not sent any maintenance to their families during their absence, he wrote to their commanders asking them to give them the following options: they were either to return to their wives, or send them sufficient maintenance, or divorce them, but if they divorced them they were obliged to send maintenance to cover the past period.⁴⁵⁷

Protecting the honour of the Mujāhideen

Another result of 'Umar's checking on the people at night was that he protected the honour of the *Mujāhideen*. He went out one night and walked around Madeenah, and he heard some lines of poetry which contained something dubious. In the middle of the night, a woman was expressing her wish for wine and the company of a handsome young man for whom she had always longed, whether that was a real wish and she meant it, or said it simply as poetry without meaning it. Whatever the case, the words appeared dubious. She started to say lines such as:

"Is there any way to get some wine and drink it?
Is there any way to reach Naṣr ibn Ḥajjāj?"

After hearing this, 'Umar sent for Naṣr ibn Ḥajjāj the following morning, and saw that he was the most handsome of people, with splendid hair. He ordered that his hair be shaved off, but that only made him more handsome. He ordered him to wear a turban, but that only made him more handsome. So he expelled him to Baṣra,⁴⁵⁸ lest women be tempted by him, and so as to block the means of temptation and protect the honour of the soldiers who were guarding the border for the sake of Allah. This action of 'Umar's shows the farsightedness of his public policies and his wisdom in giving precedence to the public interest. The fact that Naṣr was so

⁴⁵⁷ Op. cit., p. 170.

⁴⁵⁸ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 91.

handsome, and that the soldiers were away from their wives, and that people felt at ease and secure in Madeenah, could have led to *fitnah*, so it was better for this spoiled youth to be sent to a military town where he could gain experience in fighting or benefit from seeing the heroic actions of real men. Baṣra — which was a military town at that time — was the best remedy for such a youth.⁴⁵⁹

The woman whom 'Umar had heard was afraid that he might rebuke her, so she sent him some lines of verse in which she said:

"Tell the Imam who is respected and feared: what do I need of wine and Naṣr ibn Ḥajjāj?

I was referring to Abu Hafs by mentioning someone else. And all I wanted was to drink milk and relax..."

'Umar sent word to her saying: "I have heard something good about you. I did not expel him (Naṣr) because of you, rather I heard that he enters upon women and I cannot trust them."⁴⁶⁰ Then 'Umar wrote a letter to his governor in Baṣra, and the messenger stayed there for several days, then a caller cried out, "The mail of the Muslims is going to leave, so whoever wants to send a letter, let him write it." Naṣr ibn Ḥajjāj wrote a letter in which he said: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, for the slave of Allah 'Umar, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*..." then he wrote some lines of verse in which he questioned why he had been expelled because of a woman saying some silly things. 'Umar said: "So long as I am the ruler, he may not return." So he did not return to Madeenah until after 'Umar died.⁴⁶¹

There is a similar story in which 'Umar went on his night patrol around Madeenah and heard some women talking and

⁴⁵⁹ *Awwalīyāt al-Fāroq*, p. 82.

⁴⁶⁰ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 92.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid*, Pp. 92, 93.

wondering which young man in Madeenah was most handsome. One of them said: "Abu Dhu'ayb." 'Umar looked for him and found that he was one of the most handsome of people. He said to him, "Rather you are a wolf (*dhi'b*) for them. Go and never stay in the same city as me." The young man said: "If you are going to do that, then let me join my cousin Naṣr ibn al-Ḥajjāj." They were both from Banu Sulaym, and 'Umar let him join his cousin.⁴⁶²

This action of 'Umar's was dictated by the situation of the ummah, and is consistent with his strong inclination to make the most of individual potentials. 'Umar's era was one in which the armies were mobilized and all those who were able for it were sent to fight for the sake of Allah, so how could 'Umar hear of these two young men who were in Madeenah although there was no reason why they should not go and fight. Expelling them from Madeenah was better than leaving them to compose poems and sit with women.⁴⁶³

*"Will you carry my burden for me
on the Day of Resurrection?"*

It was narrated that Aslam the freed slave of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: " 'Umar went out to Ḥarrat Wāqim⁴⁶⁴, and I went with him. When we were in Ṣarār⁴⁶⁵, we saw a fire burning. He said, 'O' Aslam, I see here some travellers who are being held up by the night and the cold; let's go.' So we went running and when we came near to them, we saw a woman with children. There was a pot set up over the fire, and her children were crying. 'Umar said, 'Peace be upon you, O' people of the light (he did not want to say, O' people of the fire).' She said,

⁴⁶² *Ash-Shaykhān min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, Pp. 211, 212.

⁴⁶³ *Awwaliyāt al-Fārooq*, p. 83.

⁴⁶⁴ A *ḥarrah* is an area with black volcanic rocks. Madeenah is situated between two *ḥarrahs*.

⁴⁶⁵ A place located three miles from Madeenah.

'And upon you be peace.' He said, 'May I come closer?' She said, 'Come if you can do some good, otherwise leave us alone.' He came closer and said, 'What is the matter with you?' She said, 'The night and the cold held us up.' He said, 'What is the matter with these children; why are they crying?' She said, 'They are hungry.' He said, 'What is in this pot?' She said, 'Water, to calm them down until they go to sleep, and Allah will judge between us and 'Umar.' He said, 'May Allah have mercy on you, how could 'Umar know about you?' She said, 'How come he is in charge of our affairs, but he is not aware of our situation?' He turned to me and said, 'Let's go.' So we set off running until we came to the room where wheat was stored. He took out a sack of wheat and a little fat, and said, 'Hoist it up onto me.' I said, 'I will carry it for you.' He said, 'Will you carry my burden for me on the Day of Resurrection, may you be bereft of your mother?' So I hoisted it up onto him and he set out running and I ran with him. When he reached her, he put those things down. He took out some of the wheat and said to her, 'Prepare it for me and I will cook it for you.' He started blowing beneath the pot and I saw the smoke coming out through his beard. He cooked it for her, and brought it to her, and said, 'Bring me something.' So she brought him a vessel and he poured it into it, then said, 'Feed them and I will spread it out (to cool down) for them.' He stayed until they had eaten their fill, and he left the leftover food with her. He got up, and I got up with him, and she started to say, 'May Allah reward you with good; you are more suited to be the caliph than *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.' He said, 'Say something good, and if you go to the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you will find me there *insha' Allâh* — Allah willing." Then he walked some distance away from her, then turned to face them again and waited a while. I said to him, 'Is there anything else?' but he did not answer me, until I saw the boys wrestling then falling asleep, having calmed down. Then he stood up and said, 'Praise be to Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty.' Then he turned to me and said, 'O' Aslam, hunger kept

them awake and made them cry; I did not want to leave until I saw what I saw.’⁴⁶⁶

“O’ Ameer al-Mu’mineen, give your companion the glad tidings of a boy”

Whilst ‘Umar was patrolling one night, he passed by one of the courtyards of Madeenah and saw a tent that had not been there the night before. He drew closer and heard the cries of a woman in labour. He saw a man sitting there, so he went to him and greeted him with *salām*, and asked: “Who are you?” He said, “I am one of the people of the desert, and I have come to *Ameer al-Mu’mineen* to get a share of his bounty.” He then asked, “What is this noise I can hear inside the tent?” He said, “May Allah have mercy on you, it is not your concern.” He said, “Never mind, tell me what it is.” He said, “A woman in labour.” He asked, “Is there anyone with her?” He said, “No.” So ‘Umar went to his home and said to his wife Umm Kulthoom bint ‘Ali, “Do you want some reward that Allah has made easy for you?” She asked, “What is it?” He said, “A woman who is a stranger and is in labour, and has no one with her.” She said, “Yes, if you wish.” He said, “Take with you whatever women need for giving birth of cloths and creams, and bring me a pot and some fat and grains.” She brought those things, and he said, “Let’s go.” He carried the pot and she walked behind him until they reached the tent. He said to her, “Go in to the woman,” and he went and sat with the man and said to him, “Light a fire for me.” He did that, and he put the pot on the fire until the food was cooked. The woman gave birth and ‘Umar’s wife said, “O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, give your companion the glad tidings of a boy.” When the Bedouin heard the words *Ameer al-Mu’mineen* it was as if he got scared and he started to back away. ‘Umar said to him, “Stay where you are.” He took the pot and placed

⁴⁶⁶ *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/214; at-Ṭabari, 5/200.

it by the door and said (to his wife), "Let her eat her fill." So she did that, then she brought the pot out and placed it by the door, and 'Umar got up and took it and placed it in front of the man and said, "Eat, woe to you! You have stayed up all night." And he said to his wife, "Come out." He said to the man, "Tomorrow come to us and we will give you what you need." The next day he came to him and he gave a stipend to his son, like any other Muslim child.⁴⁶⁷

*"By Allah I will not obey him in public
and disobey him in private"*

It was narrated that Aslam, the freed slave of 'Umar (ؓ), said: "Whilst I was with 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb as he was patrolling Madeenah, he got tired and leaned against a wall in the middle of the night. He heard a woman saying to her daughter: "O' my daughter, get up and mix that milk with water." She said, "O' my mother, what about the decree of the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" She said, "What was his decree?" She said, "He commanded his caller to cry out: Do not dilute milk with water." She said to her, "O' my daughter, get up and dilute that milk with water, for you are in a place whether neither 'Umar nor his caller can see you." The girl said, "By Allah, I will not obey him in public and disobey him in private." 'Umar heard all of that, then he said, "O' Aslam, mark the door and remember where it is." Then he carried on with his patrol. The next day, he said, "O' Aslam, go to that place and see who said that and who she said it to, and whether they have a husband." He went to that place and found a single girl with no husband, and the other woman was her mother who had no man. He came to 'Umar and told him, and 'Umar called his sons together and said, "Does any one of you need a woman to marry? If your father had any energy none of you would beat him to this girl." 'Abdullâh said, "I have a wife." 'Abdur-Rahmân said, "I

⁴⁶⁷ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/140.

have a wife." 'Âṣim said, "O' my father, I do not have a wife, so let me marry her." He sent for the girl and married her to 'Âṣim. She bore him a daughter, and that daughter bore a daughter, and that granddaughter bore 'Umar ibn al-'Azeez (may Allah have mercy on him).⁴⁶⁸

Ibn 'Abdul-Hâdi said: "Some of them said that this is how it is narrated in this report, but it is a mistake. The correct version is: 'She bore 'Âṣim a daughter, and the daughter bore 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez (may Allah have mercy on him).'"⁴⁶⁹

'Umar used to check on the people himself, and he would patrol at night and fulfil his duty towards the people, seeking the reward thereof with Allah. His keenness to keep up to date with affairs in his state was not limited to the capital only, rather that concern extended to all regions of the Islamic state, as we shall see in the following pages *insha' Allâh*.

3.2.5. His kindness and compassion towards animals

'Umar's kindness towards animals stemmed from his faith which made him kind and compassionate towards everything. His heart had been softened by the remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*) and he felt compassion towards all of Allah's creation. He learned from Islam that in every living being there is reward, and that it is not permissible in Islam to abuse animals, to destroy them for no reason, to use them in ways for which they were not created or to force them to do more than they are able.⁴⁷⁰ 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) declared that if a mule stumbled in Iraq, he was responsible for not having the road paved. There follow some examples of 'Umar's kindness towards animals

⁴⁶⁸ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 89, 90.

⁴⁶⁹ *Maḥḍ as-Sawâb*, 1/391.

⁴⁷⁰ *Shaheed al-Mihrâb*, p. 226.

which are glowingly recorded in Islamic history.

"Will you burden your camel with more than it can bear?"

It was narrated that al-Musayyib ibn Dârim said: "I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) beating a camel driver and saying, 'Will you burden your camel with more than it can bear?'"⁴⁷¹

"Do you not know that they have rights over you?"

Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays said: "We came to 'Umar with news of a great conquest, and he asked, 'Where are you staying?' I said, 'In such and such a place.' He came with me until we reached the place where the animals were resting, and he checked them over and asked, 'Will you not fear Allah with regard to these mounts of yours? Do you not know that they have rights over you? Why did you not let them loose so that they could eat of the vegetation of the earth?'"⁴⁷²

Treating the zakah camels

A delegation from Iraq, among whom was al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, came to 'Umar on a very hot summer's day. 'Umar had wrapped an *abayah* around his head like a turban and was daubing one of the zakah camels with pitch (as a remedy). He said: "O' Aḥnaf, take off your cloak and come and help the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* with this camel, for it is one of the zakah camels and it has the same rights as the widows, the orphans and the poor." A man said, "May Allah forgive you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, why don't you tell one of the zakah slaves to do that for you?" 'Umar said, "What slave is more of a slave than me or al-Aḥnaf? The one who is appointed in charge of the Muslims has the same duty towards them as a slave to his master, the duty of sincerity and fulfilling the trust."⁴⁷³

⁴⁷¹ *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawâb*, 2/469.

⁴⁷² *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh*, 2/605.

⁴⁷³ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 343, quoting from Ibn al-Jawzi.

“An animal has been made to suffer because of ‘Umar’s wishes”

‘Umar wanted some fresh fish, so Yarfa’ — his freed slave — took a camel and travelled two days there and two days back to buy some fish and bring it to him. Yarfa’ went and washed the sweat from his mount. ‘Umar looked at it and said, “An animal has been made to suffer because of ‘Umar’s wishes. By Allah, ‘Umar will never taste that (fish).”⁴⁷⁴

“I am afraid that I will be questioned about you”

‘Umar saw a camel which appeared exhausted and sick. He went to it, laid his hand on the camel’s back and examined it, saying, “I am afraid that I will be questioned about you (i.e., on the Day of Resurrection).”⁴⁷⁵

These are some stories of ‘Umar which demonstrate his kindness and compassion towards animals. Would that our confused youth would learn about their history and about Islam, so that they would know that there is no humane principle that benefits human society but Islam has enjoined it and explained it in detail; then they would not be dazzled by the west which boasts of its animal welfare societies as being one of the signs of its humane principles, and our youth would not imitate the west thinking that they invented such things. They should realize that we taught the west everything it knows about kindness to animals⁴⁷⁶ and everything that is beneficial.

Remembering that Allah (ﷻ) is always watching is the key to guidance and goodness and is the essence of worship. Even with regard to a sick camel, ‘Umar feared that his Lord would question him about it. This is the essence of Islam, awareness of Allah’s

⁴⁷⁴ *Ar-Riyâḍ an-Naḍrah*, p. 408.

⁴⁷⁵ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/215.

⁴⁷⁶ *Shaḥeed al-Miḥrâb*, p. 288.

watching and fear of Him that stills the heart. Can any ruler succeed without this, can he escape the reckoning of Allah when he has been appointed in charge of His slaves?⁴⁷⁷

3.2.6. Earthquake during the time of 'Umar

There was an earthquake at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and he said: "O' people, this earthquake is only because of some sins that you are committing. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if it happens again I will never stay among you."⁴⁷⁸

4. 'Umar's Concern for Knowledge, the *Dâ'iyahs* and the Scholars

4.1. 'Umar's concern for knowledge

Knowledge is one of the most important factors for the Muslim ummah to prevail, because it is impossible to imagine that Allah would support an ignorant nation which does not seek knowledge. Anyone who studies the Holy Qur'an will realize that it is filled with verses that give knowledge a high status and encourages us to seek it and acquire it. The first verse of the Book of Allah which enjoins knowledge and reading is:

﴿Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created [all that exists].﴾

(*Qur'an* 96: 1)

⁴⁷⁷ Op. cit., p. 229.

⁴⁷⁸ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 140; quoting from *ad-Dâ' wa ad-Dawâ'* by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 53.

The Qur'an also describes knowledge as the opposite of *kufṛ*, which is ignorance and misguidance. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who know not?' It is only men of understanding who will remember [i.e. get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses].» (Qur'an 39: 9)

The only thing that Allah commanded His Prophet to ask for more of was knowledge⁴⁷⁹, as He (ﷻ) says:

«... And say, 'My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.'» (Qur'an 20: 114)

The *Ṣaḥābah* understood that knowledge and understanding of religion are among the means of attaining divine help and support. Hence they were keen to understand their religion and to learn the word of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. Their pursuit of knowledge was for the sake of Allah. They were also keen to learn the evidence for rulings, and they were certain that it is essential to act upon one's knowledge, otherwise Allah would take away the blessing from it. The *Ṣaḥābah* learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) his *du'ā'*: «“O' Allah, I seek refuge with You from knowledge that is of no benefit, from a heart that is not humble, from a soul that is never satisfied and from a prayer that is not answered.”»⁴⁸⁰

The ummah bore witness to 'Umar's great knowledge and the fact that he was one of the *faqeehs* of the earliest generation, without parallel. He was known for the depth of his knowledge, his analytical ability and his brilliance in reaching the right conclusions. This — after the help and guidance of Allah — qualified him for that prominent position. Thus 'Umar became the *faqeeh* of the Muslims after he became caliph, and through his *ijtihād* he established the

⁴⁷⁹ *At-Tamkeen li'l-Ummah al-Islāmiyah*, p. 62.

⁴⁸⁰ Muslim, hadith no. 2722.

principles of justice based on the core teachings of Islam. 'Umar was one of the foremost *faqeehs* of the *Ṣaḥābah*, and the righteous *salaf* praised his knowledge and understanding, and his precise knowledge of *shar'ī* rulings. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was cautious in accepting *aḥādēeth* and he discussed various issues of knowledge with the *Ṣaḥābah*. He would ask the *Ṣaḥābah* about matters that he had not learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He encouraged the pursuit of knowledge, and would check on people to encourage them to learn. He made Madeenah a centre of *fiqh* and *fatwas*, and it became a school from which governors and judges graduated. He prepared a select group of the *Ṣaḥābah* to lead institutes of learning (the mosques) in the conquered regions, where they taught and educated the conquered peoples in accordance with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). Thus he laid the foundations for the schools which had such an effect on the Muslim peoples, such as the schools of Baṣra, Koofah and Damascus, and he further developed the schools of Madeenah and Makkah.

4.1.1. His caution in accepting *aḥādēeth* and his discussions of knowledge and asking about matters of which he was unaware

His caution in accepting aḥādēeth and seeking confirmation

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari asked for permission to enter the place of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, but he did not let him in — as if he was busy — so Abu Moosa went away. 'Umar finished what he was doing and asked: "Did I not hear the voice of 'Abdullāh ibn Qays? Let him in." It was said, "He has gone back." So he called him and he (Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari) said, "We were commanded to do that." He asked, "Can you bring me proof of that?" So he went to a gathering of the Anṣār and asked them, and they said, "No one will testify about that for you but the youngest of us." Abu Sa'eed stood

up and said, "We were commanded to do that." 'Umar said, "I did not learn of that from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). I was too busy in the markets," i.e., going out for trade.⁴⁸¹

According to the report narrated by Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, he said: "I was in a gathering of the Anṣār when Abu Moosa came, looking worried, and said, 'I asked permission to meet 'Umar three times and he did not let me in, so I went away. He asked me what stopped me and I said, 'I asked permission to enter and meet you three times and I was not admitted so I went away, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «'If any one of you asks permission to enter three times and he is not admitted, let him go away.'» And he said, 'You have to bring me proof of that.' Is there anyone among you who heard that from the Prophet (ﷺ)?' Ubayy ibn Ka'b said, 'By Allah, no one will go with you but the youngest of the people.' I was the youngest of the people, so I went with him and told 'Umar that the Prophet (ﷺ) had said that."⁴⁸²

'Umar's discussion of knowledge and asking about matters of which he was unaware

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: "A woman who did tattoos was brought to 'Umar and he stood up and said, 'I adjure you by Allah, who heard anything from the Prophet (ﷺ) about tattoos?' Abu Hurayrah said that he stood up and said, 'O' Ameer al-Mu'mineen, I heard something.' He asked, 'What did you hear?' He said, «'I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, 'Do not do tattoos or have them done.'»"⁴⁸³

It was narrated from al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah that: «" 'Umar consulted them about causing a woman to miscarry. Al-Mugheerah

⁴⁸¹ Muslim, hadith no. 2153.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Bukhari, hadith no. 5946.

said, 'The Prophet ruled that the one who does that should free a male or female slave.' He said, 'Bring someone who can testify with you.' So Muhammad ibn Maslamah testified that he saw the Prophet (ﷺ) pass such a judgement."⁴⁸⁴

It was narrated that: " 'Umar was asked about a man who became *junub* whilst travelling and could not find water. He said, 'He should not pray until he finds water.' 'Ammâr said to him, «'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, do you not remember when you and I were riding camels and we became *junub*? As for me, I rolled on the ground like an animal, and as for you, you did not pray. I told the Prophet (ﷺ) about that and he said, 'It would have been sufficient for you to do this,'⁴⁸⁵ and he struck the ground with his hands and wiped his face and hands.'» 'Umar said to him, 'Fear Allah, O' 'Ammâr.' He said, 'If you wish, I will not speak of it.' He said, 'No, we accept what you say.' This was a Sunnah that 'Umar had witnessed but then forgotten until he ruled differently, then 'Ammâr reminded him but he did not remember. He did not disbelieve 'Ammâr, rather he told him to speak of it."⁴⁸⁶

4.1.2. Sayings of 'Umar encouraging the pursuit of knowledge

'Umar said: "If a man comes out of his house carrying a burden of sins like the mountains of Tihâmah, then when he hears some knowledge he fears Allah and repents, he will go back home with no sins on him. So do not forsake the gatherings of the scholars."⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁴ Bukhari, hadith no. 6906.

⁴⁸⁵ Nasâ'i, *at-Tahârah*, 217.

⁴⁸⁶ *Al-Fatâwa*, 20/135.

⁴⁸⁷ *Miftâh Dâr as-Sa'âdah*, 1/122; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 135.

'Umar said: "No man is a scholar until he does not envy those who are above him and does not despise those who are beneath him, and does not take any payment for his work."

And he said: "Acquire knowledge before you become leaders and pride prevents you from learning and you live in ignorance."⁴⁸⁸

And he said: "Even if knowledge does not benefit you, it will never harm you."⁴⁸⁹

And he said: "The death of a thousand worshippers is easier to bear than the death of a scholar who has knowledge of what Allah has permitted and forbidden."⁴⁹⁰

And he said: "Be vessels of the Qur'an (i.e., learn it by heart) and founts of knowledge, and ask Allah for provision day by day, and it will not harm you if He does not give you a lot."⁴⁹¹

And he also said: "Seek knowledge and teach it to people. Learn dignity and tranquillity, and be humble towards those from whom you learn knowledge and be humble towards those to whom you teach it, and do not be tyrannical scholars otherwise your knowledge cannot be established because of your tyranny."⁴⁹²

'Umar warned against the mistakes of scholars and said: "Islam will be destroyed by the mistakes of scholars, the arguments of the hypocrites who misinterpret the Qur'an to support their views and misleading rulers."⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁸ *At-Tabyân fee Âdâb Hamlat al-Qur'an*, by an-Nawawi, p. 60; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 163.

⁴⁸⁹ *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad, p. 174; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 168.

⁴⁹⁰ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 157; *Miftâḥ Dâr as-Sa'âdah*, 1/121.

⁴⁹¹ *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 159; *al-Bayân wa at-Tabyeen* by al-Jâhidh, 2/303.

⁴⁹² *Akhhbâr 'Umar*, p. 263; *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 2/686.

⁴⁹³ *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 2/717.

4.1.3. Persisting in guiding and educating people in Madeenah

'Umar persisted in guiding and educating the people through daily contact, especially on Fridays when the *Jumu'ah khuṭbah* from the *minbar* played an important role in teaching and guiding the ummah. History has recorded many of 'Umar's sermons, and we will quote some of them below.

'Umar delivered a *khuṭbah* from the *minbar* of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: "When the prohibition of *khamr* (wine, alcohol) came, *khamr* was made from five things: grapes, dates, wheat, barley and honey. But *khamr* is anything that befogs (*khāmara*) the mind. There are three things which I wish the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had not left us before settling the matter: how much a grandfather may inherit (from his grandson), the inheritance of *al-kalālah*⁴⁹⁴ and some types of *riba*.⁴⁹⁵

He delivered a *khuṭbah* one Friday in which he advised the people and explained their rights over him. He said: "O' people, some greed is poverty and some despair is richness. You amass that which you do not consume and you hope for that which you can never have. You have been given a respite in this world. At the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) you were checked by means of the *wahy* (revelation), and whoever hid something was brought to account and whoever did something openly was brought to account. Show us the best of your behaviour, and Allah knows what is in your hearts. If someone shows us one thing but claims that he is good in his heart, we will not believe him. If he shows us that he is outwardly good, we will think well of him. Remember that stinginess is one of

⁴⁹⁴ *Kalālah*: A deceased person among whose heirs there is no father or son. [Translator]

⁴⁹⁵ *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 300, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya.

the branches of hypocrisy, so spend, it is better for you.

«... And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.» (Qur'an 59: 9)

O' people, pay attention to the Hereafter and set your affairs straight; fear Allah your Lord, and do not dress your women in *qubāṭi* garments, for although they are not see-through, they still show the shape. O' people, I wish that I would be saved by a small margin, and I hope that if I live among you for a short time or a long time, I will do the right thing by you *insha' Allāh*, so that each of the Muslims will continue to receive his right and his share of the wealth of Allah even if he stays in his house. Take care of the wealth that Allah has bestowed upon you. A little provision acquired with kindness is better than a lot acquired through violence. Being killed is a way of death that could befall righteous and evildoers alike, and the martyr is the one who devotes himself for the sake of Allah. If any one of you wants to acquire a camel, let him choose one that is tall and big and strike it with his stick; if it does not flinch then let him buy it."⁴⁹⁶

Great wisdom in a *khuṭbah*

'Umar opened his *khuṭbah* with words of great wisdom, in which he explained that true richness comes with contentment and that true poverty comes with greed. The basis of contentment is showing no interest in what other people have. Whoever shows no interest in what others have will be content with what he has, and whoever is content with what he has is rich even if he is poor. Whoever is controlled by greed and looks at what others have will feel that he is poor even if he has a great deal of wealth, because his wealth is not making him feel independent. Richness is richness of

⁴⁹⁶ *Farā'id al-Kalām*, p. 190, quoting from *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*.

the heart, and common sense dictates that a person should not acquire more than he needs of worldly wealth, and his worldly ambitions should not be attached to that which he does not possess; he should regard this world as something transient and not be deceived by its attractions and temptations.⁴⁹⁷

*Judge people as they appear to be and do not
be concerned with their inward nature*

This *khuṭbah* established the principle of dealing with people after the cessation of revelation, namely judging people as they appear to be and not being concerned with their inward nature, leaving that to Allah. This indicates that the ruler is not responsible for judging what is in people's hearts, for he can never do that; rather he is responsible for correcting their outward behaviour, because if the outward behaviour is correct, a righteous society may be established. Society can be judged to be sound if it appears to be sound and immorality is not committed in public and there are no people who openly commit immorality or defend it, even if there are individuals who may be inwardly evil, because what is apparent from the outward customs of society is consistent with the goals of that society. As for what is hidden of deviation, even though social customs reject it, those who engage in it will be forced to the fringes of society.

Some stinginess is a branch of hypocrisy

The words "Remember that some stinginess is a branch of hypocrisy" clearly refer to those who fall short in spending for the sake of Allah. They see some states and groups of their ummah being attacked by the *kuffâr*, their honour being violated and the resources of their lands being plundered, but when those who are being

⁴⁹⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*. 20/266.

attacked rise to fight in jihad, they only find a few Muslims who are willing to help them with their wealth. Those believers who are afflicted with the disease of miserliness are behaving somewhat like the hypocrites, which is a sign of weakness of faith.⁴⁹⁸

"I hope that I could be saved by a small margin"

This is indicative of 'Umar's sensitive feelings and clear understanding of his responsibility, for being in a position of leadership is one of the highest acts of righteousness, but there are many dangers which may turn it into the worst of deeds. Many leaders have been raised in status before Allah and before the righteous people because of their deeds, because they have checked themselves in all matters, minor and major. But many others have done the opposite because they gave priority to their whims and desires and gave precedence to pleasing the people rather than pleasing Allah. 'Umar (ؓ) was one of the greatest leaders in history, one of those who embodied justice in its most eloquent form, yet despite that he spoke these words; his deep fear of Allah made him forget the reward he had earned for his actions as ruler, in the hope that he would emerge pure and free of any sin he may have picked up during his rule.⁴⁹⁹

4.1.4. Sayings of 'Umar that became well known among the people

'Umar (ؓ) said: "Whoever conceals his secrets will have the choice (of telling whomever he wants to tell), but whoever speaks or acts in a suspicious manner should not blame anyone who thinks badly of him. Do not think badly of a word spoken by your brother when you can still find good ways to interpret it. Think positively of

⁴⁹⁸ Op. cit., 20/267.

⁴⁹⁹ *At-Tareekh al-Islāmi*, 20/267.

your brother until you are certain that he is not like that. Do not swear a great deal lest Allah humiliate you. There is no better reward for one who disobeys Allah concerning you than your obeying Allah concerning him. You should seek sincere friends and maintain good relations with them, for they are a pleasure at times of ease and a support at times of calamity.”⁵⁰⁰

These are eloquent words which from which we may learn a great deal. There follows a brief commentary on these words.

Whoever conceals his secrets will have the choice

A man will remain in control of his affairs so long as he conceals his secrets. If he discloses his secret to one or more people, then realizes that it would have been better not to disclose it, he cannot reverse the situation.

But whoever speaks or acts in a suspicious manner should not blame anyone who thinks badly of him

Each person is responsible for himself before other people. He should try to keep his name clear and explain himself as much as he can. If he thinks that some people have misunderstood his behaviour, he should hasten to explain, even if he is trusted by everyone and has a high standing in society. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to the two men who saw him walking with a woman at night, “Wait a minute, she is Safiyyah bint Ḥuyayy.”⁵⁰¹

Do not think badly of a word spoken by your brother when you can still find good ways to interpret it

Here ‘Umar instructs us to be cautious about thinking badly of others. Thinking well of fellow-Muslims is something that is required

⁵⁰⁰ *Tāreekh Dimashq*, 44/359; *at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 20/270.

⁵⁰¹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 20/271.

of the Muslim, and trying to find the best way to interpret words that appear bad, unless he finds out that these words are in fact pure evil, is also something that is required of the Muslim, who should at the same time take precautions for himself and for those who are under his care, lest they be caught unawares.⁵⁰²

Do not swear a great deal lest Allah humiliate you

Swearing by Allah (ﷻ) is an act of veneration. If it is done according to need and in an attitude of veneration and fear of Allah, then it is an affirmation of His greatness, but if a Muslim swears by Allah a great deal, even concerning trivial matters, then this will never be an act of veneration of Allah, rather it will come under the heading of disrespect and carelessness. In consequence, the one who swears a great deal by Allah will expose himself to Allah's humiliation of him, and whoever exposes himself to that loses a great deal.

There is no better reward for one who disobeys Allah concerning you than your obeying Allah concerning him

If there is a disagreement between you and another person, and he disobeys Allah concerning you, either by being aggressive towards you or by violating your honour or taking your wealth, the best manner in which can you requite him is by obeying Allah concerning him, by adhering to the Islamic etiquette of disagreement and respecting the rights of your Muslim brother and not sinking to his level or responding in kind. Then if you forgive him and yield your rights, that is perfect obedience to Allah.

You should seek sincere friends

Yes, you may have a brother who was not borne by the same mother; sincere brothers whose hearts come together on the path of

⁵⁰² *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 20/271.

taqwa may make greater sacrifices than brothers who are linked by blood. Sincere brothers are a source of joy at times of ease when one is happy to meet them and join them in doing righteous deeds; then when calamity comes and the going gets tough, they are a support to their brothers and compete in spending and sacrificing, and in working hard and being selfless.⁵⁰³

There are some other sayings of 'Umar which became well known among the people, such as the following:

"When did you enslave people whose mothers bore them free?"

"No one is suited to this position except the one who is gentle without being weak and strong without being harsh."

"I want a man for the position of governorship who, when he is the leader of people he would be thought of as one of them, and when he is one of them he would be thought of as their leader."

Concerning governors: "I complain to Allah of the wrongdoing of one who is strong and the incapability of one who is pious."

"Whoever does not recognize evil is more likely to fall into it."

"I am not a crafty person but I cannot be deceived by a crafty person."⁵⁰⁴

"When Allah commands people to do a thing, He helps them to do it, and when He forbids them to do a thing, He renders them independent of it."⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ Op. cit., 20/272.

⁵⁰⁴ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 212.

⁵⁰⁵ *Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Deen*, p. 311, by al-Mâwirdi; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 111.

4.2. He made Madeenah a centre of *fatwas* and fiqh

When the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, Madeenah was the capital of the Islamic state and the seat of the caliphate. The *Ṣaḥābah* there started to derive Islamic rulings to deal with the new issues that arose in the Muslim societies as the conquests spread. Madeenah occupied a prominent position among other regions. The Madeenan society was that in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had lived and where the first core of the best nation ever raised up for mankind were guided. Thus it became a society to which no other society could even come close. 'Umar's presence at the helm of the caliphate in Madeenah for ten years, with his character and his skill in ruling, had a great effect on making Madeenah the first school of hadith, fiqh and *tashree'* (legislation) in the first and second centuries. This was due to the following factors:

At the time of 'Umar, Madeenah was the gathering-point of the *Ṣaḥābah*, especially those who had been among the earliest to embrace Islam. 'Umar kept them around him so that they would be a help to him in governing the ummah and seeking to benefit from their knowledge, relying on their sincerity and seeking their opinions and consulting them. The knowledge of these *Ṣaḥābah* remained in Madeenah, where the number of *fuqaha'* among the *Ṣaḥābah* reached 130. There were seven who were most active in giving *fatwas*: 'Umar, 'Ali, 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood, 'Ā'ishah, Zayd ibn Thābit, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar. Abu Muhammad ibn Ḥazm said: "The *fatwas* of each of these could be compiled into a huge book."⁵⁰⁶

The *Ṣaḥābah* from whom a middling number of *fatwas* were narrated include: Abu Bakr [because he lived only a short time after

⁵⁰⁶ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islām*, Muhammad Sharāb, 2/45.

the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)], Umm Salamah, Anas ibn Mâlik, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, Abu Hurayrah, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Abdullâh ibn az-Zubayr, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh, Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, Talhah and az-Zubayr, 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, 'Imrân ibn Hushayn and 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit. They said that the *fatwas* of each one of these could be compiled in a small volume.⁵⁰⁷

Most of those whom I have mentioned stayed in Madeenah during the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, except when they were sent on educational missions or sent for jihad by 'Umar as the result of the expansion of the state, because the conquered lands needed those who could teach the people the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

'Umar's policy of making Madeenah a centre of fiqh and knowledge, and of decision-making and consultation, bore fruit. One indication of the success of this policy is the report narrated by Ibn 'Abbâs who said: "I was reading Qur'an with some men of the *Muhâjiroon*, among whom was 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, when I was in his house in Mina and he was with 'Umar at the end of a Hajj that he performed. Then 'Abdur-Rahmân came back to me and said, 'You should have seen when a man came to *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* today and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you should speak to So and so; he is saying, 'If 'Umar died, I would swear allegiance to So and so and by Allah, the swearing of allegiance to Abu Bakr was done in a spontaneous manner.''" 'Umar got angry, then he said, '*Insha' Allâh* I am going to deliver a speech to the people after '*Isha*', and I will warn those who want to take control of their affairs unlawfully.' 'Abdur-Rahmân said, 'No, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, do not do that. For on this occasion among the people there are those who have little

⁵⁰⁷ Op. cit.

understanding and troublemakers, and they will be all around you. I am worried that you may get up and say something that will be conveyed everywhere without people understanding it or interpreting it properly. Wait until you reach Madeenah, for it is the land of hijrah and Sunnah, where you meet exclusively with the people of fiqh and the leaders of the people. There you may say what you said with certainty, and the people of knowledge will understand exactly what you are saying and will interpret it properly.' 'Umar said, 'By Allah, if Allah wills, I will do that as soon as I reach Madeenah.'"⁵⁰⁸

Ibn Hajar said:

"This hadith provides evidence that the people of Madeenah were distinguished by their knowledge and understanding, because 'Abdur-Rahmān ibn 'Awf and 'Umar were agreed on that. He said, 'This was true in the case of 'Umar's period, but it is not necessarily the case in all periods.'"⁵⁰⁹

That period had an effect on the schools that were established as the society developed and as the conquests spread. The students of 'Umar's school in Madeenah developed their knowledge in Madeenah, then they become prominent because of their proximity to the source and because they had stayed in the Madeenan environment. Some of the students of 'Umar were sent to the conquered lands to teach and train the peoples who had entered Islam.

Madeenah became a prominent centre of knowledge and fiqh, and the Madeenan school influenced the conquered regions and the schools which were founded in Baṣra, Koofah and elsewhere. The sequence in which the centre of fiqh moved from Madeenah to other

⁵⁰⁸ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd*, hadith no. 6830.

⁵⁰⁹ *Al-Fath*, 12/155; *al-Madeenah Fajr al-Islām*, 2/46.

regions is as follows:

Madeenah was the site where the Revelation came down, and where shari'ah was formed. No other city could match it during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Madeenah was the centre for the *fuqaha* among the *Ṣaḥābah*, foremost among whom was 'Umar.

'Uthmân was killed in 35 A.H. and 'Ali moved to Koofah, but Madeenah still remained a centre of knowledge because of the *fuqaha* among the *Ṣaḥābah* who were still alive in Madeenah and who lived throughout most of the second half of the first century. They included 'Ā'ishah, Abu Hurayrah, Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh, Ibn 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ and others.

The school of the senior *Tâbi'een* was founded in Madeenah, among whom were the seven *fuqaha* who had no equal in other Muslim regions: 'Ubaydullâh, 'Urwah, Qâsim, Sa'eed, Abu Bakr, Sulaymân and Khârijah.

The second wave of *Tâbi'een* (the junior *Tâbi'een*) came along and lived until the end of the first half of the second century, of whom we may mention: Ibn Shihâb az-Zuhri, Nâfi' ibn Aslam and Yahya ibn Sa'eed al-Anṣârî.

Then came the era of Imam Mâlik, who was one of the successors of the *Tâbi'een*. He was one of the most knowledgeable of people concerning the knowledge of those of the *Tâbi'een* who had come before him, senior and junior alike.

The fact that the people of the regions needed the knowledge of the Hījâz bears witness to the knowledge of the people of Madeenah; they would travel to Madeenah in pursuit of knowledge, in a manner that was unknown in any other region. The scholars of the Muslim regions travelled to Madeenah to seek knowledge, and to discuss their issues with the scholars of Madeenah, who were their reference point in this regard. The scholars of Madeenah also went to

the regions as judges and teachers⁵¹⁰, starting with those whom 'Umar sent when he conquered Syria and Iraq, to teach the people the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood, Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān, 'Ammār ibn Yāsir, 'Imrān ibn Ḥuşayn and Salmān al-Fārisi went to Iraq; and Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, 'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, Abu ad-Dardā', Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ and others went to Syria. 'Uthmān, 'Ali, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Muhammad ibn Maslamah, Zayd ibn Thābit and others stayed with 'Umar. Ibn Mas'ood — who was the most knowledgeable of the *Ṣaḥābah* who were in Iraq at that time — issued *fatwas*, then he would come to Madeenah and ask the scholars there, and if they suggested that his rulings were not correct he would adopt their opinion.⁵¹¹

The Madeenan school influenced all the other schools, and the knowledge of the people of Madeenah was a reference point for all the Muslim regions except Koofah; the regions never saw themselves as the equals of the people of Madeenah in knowledge, such as the people of Syria and Egypt, such as al-Awzā'i and the Syrians who came before and after him, and al-Layth ibn Sa'd and the Egyptians who came before and after him. It is quite clear that they respected the actions of the people of Madeenah and followed their early *madh-hab*, as did the scholars of Baṣra, such as Ayyoob, Ḥammād ibn Zayd, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Mahdi and others. Thus the *madh-hab* of the people of Madeenah prevailed in those regions.⁵¹²

The people's trust in the knowledge of the people of Madeenah made them give precedence to it over all other knowledge. Al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdādi narrated that when Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan

⁵¹⁰ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islām wa al-'Asr ar-Rāshidi*, 2/47.

⁵¹¹ *Al-Fatāwa*, 20/172.

⁵¹² *Ibid*, 20/174.

ash-Shaybâni narrated to them from Mâlik, his house would be full, but when he narrated to them from anyone other than Mâlik, only a few people would attend. He said: "I do not know of any people who have less appreciation for their own companions than you; when I narrate to you from Mâlik, you fill my house, but when I narrate to you from your companions, you come reluctantly."⁵¹³

The scholars of regions other than Madeenah varied in their level of knowledge depending on how much they had learned from the people of Madeenah. They regarded the knowledge of the people of Madeenah as the criterion of superiority. Mujâhid, 'Umar ibn Dinar and others from Makkah said: "We remained on an equal footing until 'Aṭa' ibn Abi Rabâḥ left for Madeenah; when he came back, his superiority over us was evident."⁵¹⁴

One of the main reasons why fiqh flourished in Madeenah at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was the inspired personality of 'Umar himself. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) bore witness to this quality of 'Umar when he saw that his opinion was always correct.

'Umar made the capital of the state a school from which graduated scholars, *dâ'iyahs*, governors and judges. If we look at the first schools in the Muslim world, we will see the influence that 'Umar had on them, because nearly all of their founders were influenced by the fiqh of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). There follows a brief description of these schools.

4.2.1. The school of Makkah

This school occupied a special status in the hearts of the believers, those who came to the sacred land of Allah as pilgrims and

⁵¹³ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm wa al-'Asr ar-Râshidi*, 2/48.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid*, 2/48.

visitors. Makkah holds a special place in the hearts of every believer who sees it or longs to see it. There was little knowledge in Makkah at the time of the *Ṣaḥābah*, then it increased at the end of their period and in the days of the *Tābi'een* and the time of their companions, such as Ibn Nujayḥ and Ibn Jurayj.⁵¹⁵ But Makkah enjoyed a unique blessing at the time of the *Tābi'een*, namely the presence of the scholar of the ummah and the interpreter of the Qur'an, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), who devoted all his attention to learning *tafseer* and training his companions in that field, from among whom emerged prominent Imams who were pioneers in *tafseer* among the students of other schools. The scholars have mentioned a number of reasons for the superiority of the Makkan school, the most important of which is the leadership of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه).⁵¹⁶ The scholars also discussed a number of the reasons why Ibn 'Abbās was qualified for this role and why he excelled over other *Ṣaḥābah* in understanding the Book of Allah and being able to explain it. These reasons are, in brief: the Prophet's prayer for him, that he might be granted understanding of religion and knowledge of interpretation; the fact that he learned from the senior *Ṣaḥābah*; his skill in *ijtihād* and his ability to derive rules; his interest in *tafseer*; his unique method of teaching his companions; his keenness to spread knowledge; his journeys and travels; his late death; and his close position to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه).⁵¹⁷ He earned the special care of 'Umar when the latter noticed in him the signs of brilliance and intelligence. He would invite him to his gatherings and bring him close to him, and he would consult him and follow his opinion with regard to verses of which he was not sure, even though Ibn 'Abbās was still young. This had a great impact on him, motivating him to acquire knowledge and progress further, and

⁵¹⁵ *Al-I'lān wa at-Tawbeekh li man Dhamma at-Tāreekh*, p. 292.

⁵¹⁶ *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/371, by Dr. Muḥammad al-Khaḍari.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid*, 1/374-395.

to focus more on *tafseer* and other fields of knowledge. It was narrated from 'Âmir ash-Sha'bi that Ibn 'Abbâs said: "My father said to me, 'O' my son, I see that the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* brings you close to him, and he sits alone with you and consults you along with some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Learn three things from me: fear Allah and never disclose his ('Umar's) secrets; never lie to him; and never backbite about anyone to him.'" ⁵¹⁸ 'Umar would include him alongside the senior *Ṣaḥâbah*, and that was only because he saw in him deep understanding, clear thinking and subtle insight. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said: " 'Umar used to ask me alongside the Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ), and he used to say to me, 'Do not speak until they have spoken,' and when I had spoken he said, 'I feel disappointed that you could not come up with something like this young man who has not yet reached the age of maturity.'" ⁵¹⁹ Because Ibn 'Abbâs was careful to observe proper etiquette when he sat in a gathering with others who were older than him, he would not speak until he was given permission. 'Umar noticed that and encouraged him to speak and to seek knowledge. ⁵²⁰

As we mentioned in our commentary on the verses:

«Would any of you wish to have a garden...» (*Qur'an* 2: 266)

And:

«When there comes the Help of Allah [to you, O' Muhammad against your enemies] and the Conquest [of Makkah].» (*Qur'an* 110: 1)

'Umar used to hold gatherings in which he would listen to the youth and teach them. Ibn 'Abbâs was one of those who were close to

⁵¹⁸ *Al-Hilyah*, 1/318; *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/376.

⁵¹⁹ *Al-Mustadrak*, 3/539; al-Ḥâkim classed its isnad as *ṣaḥeeḥ* and adh-Dhahabi agreed with him.

⁵²⁰ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/377.

'Umar. It was narrated that 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Zayd said: "When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) had offered a *nafl* prayer, he went into a *mirbad* of his and sent for some young men who had knowledge of the Qur'an, including Ibn 'Abbās. They would come and recite Qur'an and study together, then when it was time for the siesta he would depart. When they came to this verse:

﴿And when it is said to him, 'Fear Allah', he is led by arrogance to [more] crime. So enough for him is Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest! And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to [His] slaves.﴾

(Qur'an 2: 206-207)

Ibn 'Abbās said to someone who was beside him: "The two men are bound to fight." 'Umar heard what he said, and asked, "What did you say?" He said, "Nothing, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He asked again, "What did you say? The two men are bound to fight?" When Ibn 'Abbās saw that he said, "I can see in this verse that when one is commanded to fear Allah, he is led by arrogance to (more) crime, and I can see when that the one who sells himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah, gets up and tells the other to fear Allah, he will not accept it and he will be led by arrogance to (more) crime. The (good) man will say, 'I sell myself (for Allah),' and he will fight him. And the two men are bound to fight." 'Umar said, 'What a brilliant thought this is, O' Ibn 'Abbās.'"⁵²¹

'Umar would ask Ibn 'Abbās about something in the Qur'an, and he would say, "Dive, O' diver!"⁵²²

If some difficult cases came to 'Umar, he would say to Ibn 'Abbās: "O' Abu 'Abbās, we have some difficult cases, and you are

⁵²¹ *Tafseer at-Ṭabari*, 4/245; *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 1/578.

⁵²² *Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* by Aḥmad, 2/981, 1940.

the one to tackle such matters.” Then he would follow his opinions. And he would not call on anyone else if the matter was difficult.⁵²³

It was narrated that Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs said: “I have not seen anyone quicker to understand or smarter or more knowledgeable or patient than Ibn 'Abbâs. I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb calling him to discuss difficult matters and saying, 'Here you are, here is a difficult problem for you.' And he would follow what Ibn 'Abbâs said, even though he had around him the people of Badr from among the *Muhâjireen* and Anşâr.⁵²⁴ 'Umar described him as 'the young old man, with a questioning tongue and an understanding heart'. ”⁵²⁵ Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullâh said: “I did not see 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb give precedence to anyone over Ibn 'Abbâs.⁵²⁶ Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) spent a great deal of time with 'Umar, and was keen to ask him questions and learn from him. Hence he was one of the *Ṣaḥâbah* who transmitted the most of 'Umar's *tafseer* and knowledge. Some of the scholars have suggested that Ibn 'Abbâs acquired most of his knowledge from 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them all).⁵²⁷ This is indicative of the care that Ibn 'Abbâs, the Imam of the Makkan school, received from 'Umar and how close he was to him. I think that this is something that helped Ibn 'Abbâs and encouraged him to go ahead and seek knowledge in general and *tafseer* in particular.”⁵²⁸

4.2.2. The school of Madeenah

We have spoken of 'Umar's concern for Madeenah and how he made it a centre for *fatwas*, fiqh and knowledge. The most famous of

⁵²³ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/379.

⁵²⁴ *Ṭabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 2/369.

⁵²⁵ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/379; *Faḍâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah* by Aḥmad, hadith no. 1555.

⁵²⁶ *Ṭabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 2/370.

⁵²⁷ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/381.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid*, 1/506.

those who devoted their lives to knowledge in Madeenah was Zayd ibn Thâbit (ؓ). 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb kept him in Madeenah and he gained many companions. Ibn 'Umar (ؓ) said: " 'Umar sent the *Ṣaḥābah* to various countries, but he kept Zayd ibn Thâbit in Madeenah to issue *fatwas* to its people. Ḥumayd ibn al-Aswad said: "The people of Madeenah never adopted the view of anyone after Zayd ibn Thâbit as they adopted the view of Mâlik.⁵²⁹ He was one of the *Ṣaḥābah* for whom Allah made available people to preserve their sayings and spread their knowledge and reports."⁵³⁰

ʿĀmir ash-Shaʿbi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Zayd surpassed the people in two areas: in the laws of inheritance and in the Qurʿan."⁵³¹

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) testified to Zayd's knowledge of the laws of inheritance, and said: «"Zayd is the most knowledgeable of you concerning the laws of inheritance."»⁵³²

Zayd accompanied a number of the *fuqaha'* of Madeenah, and among the most famous of his companions and those who acquired knowledge from him were six of the *Tābi'een*. Ibn al-Madeeni said: "As for those who met Zayd, and we are certain that they met him, are: Saʿeed ibn al-Musayyib, 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, Qubaysah ibn Dhu'ayb, Khârijah ibn Zayd, Abân ibn 'Uthmân and Sulaymân ibn Yasâr."⁵³³

The school of Madeenah had a great impact, as we will see when we look at the other schools.

⁵²⁹ *Al-'Ilal* by Aḥmad, 3/258, 5145; *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/506.

⁵³⁰ *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/506.

⁵³¹ *Tahdheeb Tareekh Dimashq*, 5/449; *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/508.

⁵³² *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*. Tirmidhi said it is a *ṣaḥeeḥ ḥasan* hadith, no. 3791.

⁵³³ *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/510.

4.2.3. The school of Baṣra

The city of Baṣra was founded by 'Utbaḥ ibn Ghazwān (ﷺ), who founded it in 14 A.H. at the behest of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. We will discuss that further, *insha' Allāh*, when we discuss 'Umar's policies on civil development. Baṣra is three years older than Koofah⁵³⁴, and was Koofah's competitor in all fields of knowledge. Many of the *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions of the Prophet) settled there⁵³⁵, including Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and 'Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn (may Allah be pleased with them both), and several other *Ṣaḥābah*, the last of whom was Anas ibn Mālīk (ﷺ).⁵³⁶ Among the most famous people who settled in Baṣra were Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allah be pleased with them both). Abu Moosa was one of those who had come to Makkah and embraced Islam, then he migrated to Abyssinia with those who migrated there. He was regarded as one of the most knowledgeable of the *Ṣaḥābah*, who came to Baṣra and taught there.⁵³⁷ Abu Moosa was influenced by 'Umar and they corresponded with one another, as we shall see when we discuss the institutions of governorship and the judiciary. Abu Moosa was renowned for his knowledge, worship, piety, modesty, proud independence, renunciation of worldly aims and steadfastness in Islam. Abu Moosa is regarded as one of the greatest scholars, *faqeehs* — jurists — and *muftis* among the *Ṣaḥābah*. Adh-Dhahabi mentioned him in *Tadhkirah al-Huffādh* as being among the senior ranks of *Ṣaḥābah* and says of him: "He was knowledgeable, active, righteous and a reciter of Qur'an; he had the most beautiful voice when he recited Qur'an. He recited good and blessed knowledge and

⁵³⁴ Op. cit., 1/422.

⁵³⁵ Ibn Ḥibbān listed more than fifty well-known *Ṣaḥābah* who went to Baṣra. Ibid.

⁵³⁶ *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, 7/26; Muslim, 1/65.

⁵³⁷ *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/423.

was the most knowledgeable of the people of Baṣra of the Qur'an and Islam."⁵³⁸

He spent a great deal of time with the Prophet (ﷺ), and he learned from the senior *Ṣaḥābah* such as 'Umar, 'Ali, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood. Abu Moosa was especially influenced by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. 'Umar used to send him letters of recommendation and advice during his long governorship in Baṣra. Abu Moosa also used to refer to 'Umar concerning all cases that came before him, and ash-Sha'bi regarded him as one of the four judges who were the most famous judges of the ummah. He said: "The four judges are: 'Umar, 'Ali, Zayd ibn Thâbit and Abu Moosa."⁵³⁹

When Abu Moosa came to Madeenah, he was keen to meet 'Umar and he spent a lot of time with him. It was narrated from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Moosa that Abu Moosa (رضي الله عنه) came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb after *'Ishâ'*, and 'Umar asked him: "What brings you here?" He said, "I have come to speak to you." He said, "At this hour?" He said, "It is a matter of fiqh." So 'Umar sat down and they spoke for a long time, then Abu Moosa said, "The prayer, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "We are in a state of prayer."⁵⁴⁰

Abu Moosa was keen to seek knowledge and learn, and was equally keen to spread knowledge and teach the people. He would urge the people to learn and teach in his *khuṭbahs*. It was narrated that Abu al-Muhallab said: "I heard Abu Moosa on his *minbar* saying, 'Whoever is granted knowledge by Allah, let him teach it, but let him not speak of that of which he has no knowledge, lest he become one

⁵³⁸ *Tadhkirat al-Huffâdh*, 1/23.

⁵³⁹ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubalâ'*, 2/389.

⁵⁴⁰ *Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari aṣ-Ṣaḥâbi al-'Âlim al-Mujâhid*, by Muhammad Ṭahmâz, p. 121.

of those who overstep the mark and go beyond the bounds of Islam.' ”⁵⁴¹

Abu Moosa made the mosque of Baṣra a centre of intellectual activity, and he devoted a large part of his time to gatherings of knowledge. But that was not enough for him, rather he did not miss any opportunity to teach people. After saying the *salâm* at the end of the prayer, he would turn to face the people and start teaching them and correcting their recitation of Qur'an. Ibn Shawdhab said: "When Abu Moosa had prayed *Fajr* he would turn to face the rows, checking their recitation one by one." ⁵⁴²

Abu Moosa was renowned among the *Ṣaḥābah* for the beauty of his voice and the excellence of his recitation. People used to gather around when they heard him reciting. When Abu Moosa sat with him, 'Umar would ask him to recite whatever he could of the Qur'an. ⁵⁴³ Allah enabled him to teach the Muslims and he did all that he could to teach the Qur'an and propagate it among the people in every land he came to. He used his beautiful voice and his excellent recitation, and people would gather around him and seekers of knowledge would crowd around him in the mosque of Baṣra. He divided them into groups and circles, and he would go around to them all, reciting to them and listening to them and correcting their recitation. ⁵⁴⁴ The Holy Qur'an was his main preoccupation and he devoted most of his time to it, whether he was at home or travelling. It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik said: "Al-Ash'ari sent me to 'Umar (ﷺ) and 'Umar asked, 'How did you leave al-Ash'ari?' I said, 'I left him teaching the people the Qur'an.' He said, 'He is very

⁵⁴¹ *Aṭ-Tabaqât*, 4/107.

⁵⁴² *Siyar A'lam an-Nubala*, 2/289.

⁵⁴³ *Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari aṣ-Ṣaḥâbi al-Âlim*, Pp. 125, 126.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 127.

smart, but do not tell him.'”⁵⁴⁵

Even when he went out for jihad, he would teach others. It was narrated that Ḥaṭṭān ibn 'Abdullāh ar-Riqāshi said: “We were with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ؓ) in an army on the banks of the Tigris, when the time for prayer came. The caller gave the call for *Dhuhr* and the people got up to make *wuḍoo'*. He did *wuḍoo'* and led them in prayer, then they sat in circles, and when the time for *'Aṣr* came, the caller gave the call for *'Aṣr*. The people got up to do *wuḍoo'* again, and he told his caller to cry out: “No *wuḍoo'* except for the one who broke his *wuḍoo'*”.

His teaching efforts bore fruit, and the large number of those around him who had memorized the Qur'an and acquired great knowledge thereof, the number of whom in Baṣra alone exceeded three hundred, was a source of delight to him. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb asked his governors to send him the names of those who had memorized the Qur'an so that he might honour them and increase their stipends, Abu Moosa wrote to him and told him: “Here in this city there are over three hundred men who have memorized the Qur'an.”⁵⁴⁶

Abu Moosa was also concerned with teaching the Sunnah and its reports. He narrated a great deal from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and from the senior *Ṣaḥābah*, and many of the *Ṣaḥābah* and senior *Tābi'een* narrated from him. Adh-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Buraydah ibn al-Ḥuṣayb, Abu Umāmah al-Bāhili, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, Anas ibn Mālik, Tāriq ibn Shihāb, Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, al-Aswad ibn Yazeed, Abu Wā'il Shaqeeq ibn Salamah, Abu 'Uthmān an-Nahdi and others besides them narrated from him.”⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁵ Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari *aṣ-Ṣaḥābi al-Ālim*, p. 127.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 129.

⁵⁴⁷ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubala'*, 2/381.

Abu Moosa adhered firmly to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), as is indicated by the advice that he gave to his children when he was dying. Although he was keen to adhere to the Sunnah, he did not narrate a large number of hadith, as was also the case with other senior *Ṣaḥābah*, who feared that if they narrated reports from the Prophet (ﷺ) they would make mistakes. 'Umar would advise his governors to focus on the Qur'an and not to narrate a great deal of reports of the Sunnah, and Abu Moosa was strict in his obedience to 'Umar.

Anas ibn Mālik an-Najjārī al-Khazraji, the servant of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was known as such and took pride in it, and deservedly so.⁵⁴⁸ He said: «I served the Prophet (ﷺ) for ten years when I was a boy.⁵⁴⁹ And he said, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came when I was ten years old, and he died when I was twenty years old."⁵⁵⁰ The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed that he would have a great deal of wealth, many children and live a blessed life. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "O' Allah, grant him much wealth and many children, and bless them for him."⁵⁵¹

Adh-Dhahabi said: "The author of *at-Tahdheeb* listed nearly two hundred people who narrated from Anas.⁵⁵² He narrated 2286 hadiths, of which Bukhari and Muslim agreed upon 180. Bukhari narrated a further 80 hadiths by himself, and Muslim narrated 90 by himself.⁵⁵³ Anas ibn Mālik is regarded as the Shaykh of the senior *Tābi'i* scholars such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Sulaymān at-Taymī, Thābit al-Banānī, az-Zuhri, Rabee'ah ibn Abi 'Abdur-Raḥmān, Ibrāheem

⁵⁴⁸ *Tahdheeb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt*, 1/127.

⁵⁴⁹ *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/423.

⁵⁵⁰ Muslim, hadith no. 2029.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid, hadith no. 2480.

⁵⁵² *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 3/397.

⁵⁵³ Ibid, 3/406; *Tafseer at-Tābi'een*, 1/423.

ibn Maysarah, Yaḥya ibn Sa'eed al-Anṣāri, Muhammad ibn Sireen, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Qatādah and others.⁵⁵⁴

Anas took an interest in serving the Sunnah by narrating and teaching, and he did some important tasks in the service of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. They appointed him to some high positions in the Muslim state, especially during the reign of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. When Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari was appointed as governor of Baṣrah during 'Umar's reign, he brought Anas close to him and regarded him as one of his inner circle. It was narrated from Thâbit that Anas said: "We were with Abu Moosa on a journey, and the people were talking about this world. Abu Moosa said, 'O' Anas, these people are talking too much. Come, let us remember our Lord.' Then he said, 'What has slowed the people down (or held them back)?' I said, 'This world and the *Shayṭân* and their whims and desires.' He said, 'No, rather this world is close to them and the Hereafter is far away from them. By Allah, if only they could see it with their own eyes they would not turn away from it.'"⁵⁵⁵

Because Abu Moosa trusted Anas, he appointed him to be his messenger to the caliph 'Umar. Anas said: "Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari sent me from Baṣra to 'Umar, and 'Umar asked me about the people's situation."⁵⁵⁶

After the conquest of Tastar, Abu Moosa sent him to take the prisoners and booty to 'Umar, and he came to 'Umar with the governor of Tastar whose name was Hormuzân.⁵⁵⁷

Many of the *Ṣaḥābah* and *Tâbi'een* narrated from Anas, especially in Baṣra. He had a great impact on the asceticism (*zuhd*)

⁵⁵⁴ *Anas ibn Mâlik al-Khâdim al-Ameen*, by 'Abdul-Ḥameed Ṭahmâz, p. 135.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 149.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid*.

and worship of those who were around him. Anas was very keen to teach his companions, and he loved his students very much, bringing them close to him and honouring them. He said, "How closely you resemble the Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ)! By Allah, you are dearer to me than my own children, unless my children become as good as you, and I pray for you at the end of the night."⁵⁵⁸ That enabled him to establish a generation of scholars who acquired knowledge of hadith from him and conveyed it to others, who in turn conveyed it to those who came after them. The trustworthy companions of Anas lived until 150 A.H.⁵⁵⁹

4.2.4. The school of Koofah

Three hundred of those who had given their oath of allegiance at the tree settled in Koofah, as did seventy of those who had been present at Badr (may Allah be pleased with them all). 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb wrote to the people of Koofah saying: "O' people of Koofah, you are the head and skull of the Arabs, my arrow that I shoot if someone attacks me from here or there. I am sending to you 'Abdullâh whom I have chosen for you and preferred you over myself in doing so."⁵⁶⁰ According to another report, he said: "I am sending to you 'Ammâr as a governor, and 'Abdullâh as a teacher and advisor. They are among the best of the senior Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), so listen to them and follow their example. And I have preferred you over myself by sending 'Abdullâh to you."⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁸ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/395.

⁵⁵⁹ *Al-Ansâr fee al-'Asr ar-Râshidi*, p. 271.

⁵⁶⁰ *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 9/291; its men are the men of *ṣaḥeeḥ*, apart from Hârithah, who is *ṭhiqah*.

⁵⁶¹ *As-Sultâh at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 1/252.

'Umar paid attention to Koofah and sent Ibn Mas'ood there, and he wrote to him saying: "The Qur'an was revealed in the language (dialect) of Quraysh, so teach it to the people in the language of Quraysh and not in the language of Hudhayl."⁵⁶²

When he walked out with a group of *Ṣaḥābah* who were headed for Koofah, to bid farewell to them, he said to them: "You are going to the people of a town — meaning Koofah — who recite Qur'an like the buzzing of bees, so do not distract them with the hadith; focus on the Qur'an and do not narrate much from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Go, and my good wishes go with you."⁵⁶³

'Umar preferred that they focus on the Qur'an rather than on the Sunnah, and we can see that in the fact that when he wanted to write down the Sunnah, he consulted the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and they advised him to write it down. He kept on praying *istikhârah* for a month, then one day he decided and said: "I wanted to write down the Sunnah, but then I remembered some people who came before you: they wrote books, then they turned to these books and ignored the Book of Allah. By Allah, I do not want to cause confusion about the Book of Allah in any way, ever."⁵⁶⁴

'Umar's method was focused on establishing the Holy Qur'an firmly in people's hearts and not distracting them from it, until its meanings had taken root in society and its sciences were well established and people could distinguish between it and other Islamic sciences, including the hadith.⁵⁶⁵ Since the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), there had been this focus on the Qur'an and the caution

⁵⁶² *Al-Fath*, 8/265; *al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, by Dr. Yahya, p. 209.

⁵⁶³ *Ṭabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 6/7; *Fiqh 'Umar*, by Qal'aji, p. 659.

⁵⁶⁴ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 2/770; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 659.

⁵⁶⁵ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 268.

against being distracted from it also dated from that time. 'Umar was simply following the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ).⁵⁶⁶

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood strove hard to establish a generation that could convey the message of Allah with knowledge and understanding. He had a far-reaching impact on the hearts and minds of his companions who spent time with him and those who came after them. 'Umar bore witness to his knowledge. It was narrated that Zayd ibn Wahb said: "I was sitting among the people with 'Umar, when a small, thin man came and 'Umar looked at him with a joyful expression and said, 'A vessel filled with knowledge, a vessel filled with knowledge, a vessel filled with knowledge.' And that was Ibn Mas'ood."⁵⁶⁷

The school of Koofah was influenced by Ibn Mas'ood, and it was one of the schools which most closely followed and imitated its teacher, even after his death. His influence remained in Koofah for a long time after he died.⁵⁶⁸ He was greatly influenced by 'Umar's knowledge, and he would give up his own opinion and adopt 'Umar's opinions instead. He used to say: "If the knowledge of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb were placed in one side of the balance, and the knowledge of all the people on earth were placed on the other, the knowledge of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb would weigh more heavily."⁵⁶⁹

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) stood out among the *Ṣaḥâbah* for his recitation of the Qur'an. He learned seventy-odd *Soorahs* of the Qur'an from the lips of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was narrated that Shaqeeq ibn Salamah said: "'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood addressed us and said, 'By Allah, I learned seventy-odd *Soorahs* from the lips

⁵⁶⁶ Op. cit., p. 260.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ṭabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 3/156; *al-Ḥilyah*, 1/129.

⁵⁶⁸ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/462.

⁵⁶⁹ *Al-'Ilm* by Abu Haneefah; *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/463.

of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and by Allah the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) knew that I was the most knowledgeable of them of the Book of Allah, but I am not the best of them.'”⁵⁷⁰

It was narrated from Masrooq that mention of 'Abdullāh was made to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr, and he said: “That is a man whom I still love, after I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «Learn the Qur'an from four: from 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood — and he started with him — Sâlim the freed slave of Abu Ḥudhayfah, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Mu'âdh ibn Jabal.»”⁵⁷¹

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) acknowledged Ibn Mas'ood's great knowledge of Qur'an recitation.

And Ibn Mas'ood left behind a number of students who were famous in the fields of fiqh, knowledge, asceticism (*zuhd*) and piety, including 'Alqamah ibn Qays, Masrooq ibn al-Ajda', 'Ubaydah as-Salmâni, Abu Maysarah ibn Shurahbeel, al-Aswad ibn Yazeed, al-Ḥârith al-Ja'fi, and Murrah al-Hamadâni.⁵⁷²

4.2.5. The school of Syria

After the conquest of Syria, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyan wrote a letter to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in which he said: “The people of Syria are many and the cities are full; they need people to teach them the Qur'an and Islam. Help me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, by sending me men who can teach them.” 'Umar called Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, 'Ubâdah ibn as-Ṣâmit and Abu ad-Dardâ' (may Allah be pleased with them all) and sent them on this great mission. He said to them: “Start with Homs, for there you will find that people differ in the ways they

⁵⁷⁰ Bukhari, hadith no. 5000.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid, hadith no. 3758.

⁵⁷² *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/472-484.

learn; some of them learn quickly. If you notice that, then teach a group of people, then when you are pleased with them, let one of them you stay on, and one of you should go to Damascus and the other to Palestine." They went to Homs and they stayed there until they were pleased with the people and the level of knowledge that they had reached. Then 'Ubâdah stayed there, and Abu ad-Dardâ' went to Damascus and Mu'âdh went to Palestine.⁵⁷³

The schools in the conquered lands whose foundations were laid by 'Umar played a role in educating the people. The Syrian school was established by the efforts of Mu'âdh, Abu ad-Dardâ' and 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit and other *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them all). Abu ad-Dardâ' had a great study circle (*ḥalaqah*) in the mosque of Damascus that was attended by more than sixteen hundred people, who would recite ten by ten, and Abu ad-Dardâ' would teach the people different recitations of the Qur'an.⁵⁷⁴ Abu ad-Dardâ' is regarded as the *Ṣaḥâbi* who had the most influence in Syria and Damascus. Adh-Dhahabi said: "Abu ad-Dardâ' was the scholar of the people of Syria, and the teacher, *faqeeh* and judge of the people of Damascus."⁵⁷⁵ He was one of the few most prominent *Ṣaḥâbah* (Companions of the Prophet) in knowledge of the Qur'an.⁵⁷⁶ He encouraged the people of Syria to seek knowledge, saying, 'Why do I see your scholars dying and the ignorant among you not learning? Learn before knowledge is taken away, for the taking away of knowledge is the death of the scholars.'⁵⁷⁷ And he encouraged the pursuit of knowledge by saying, 'Be a scholar or a learner, or a lover (of knowledge) or a follower. Do not be the fifth and be doomed.'

⁵⁷³ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 259.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ghâyat an-Nihâyah fee Ṭabaqât al-Qurra'* by Ibn al-Jawzi, 1/607.

⁵⁷⁵ *At-Tadhkirah*, 1/24.

⁵⁷⁶ *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/526.

⁵⁷⁷ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 256.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "And the fifth is the innovator."⁵⁷⁸

And he said: "Seek knowledge; if you cannot, then love its people; and if you do not love them, then do not hate them."⁵⁷⁹ Learn and teach, for the scholar and the learner are equal in reward.⁵⁸⁰ But you will never be a scholar until you are a learner, and you will never be a learner until you act on what you know."⁵⁸¹ And he used to say: "You will not understand *fiqh* fully until you see the different interpretations of the verses of the Qur'an."⁵⁸²

It was narrated that when 'Umar wanted to appoint Abu ad-Dardā' as governor of Syria, he refused, but 'Umar insisted. Abu ad-Dardā' said: "If you accept that when I go there, I will go for the purpose of teaching them the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of their Prophet, and lead them in prayer, then I will go." And 'Umar accepted that.⁵⁸³

Because Abu ad-Dardā' had a great deal of knowledge in various fields, his status in the eyes of the Muslims increased. He gathered many seekers of knowledge around him. Whoever had a question about the shares of inheritance and how to calculate them, or about a hadith, or about some difficult matter, or about poetry, would come to him.⁵⁸⁴ Hence his academic influence in Syria was far-reaching, especially when it came to teaching the Qur'an.⁵⁸⁵ His preaching was also influential. One day he stood among the people of Syria and said to them: "O' people of Syria, why do you accumulate

⁵⁷⁸ *Al-Anṣār fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, p. 256.

⁵⁷⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/430.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ṣifāt aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/628.

⁵⁸¹ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 2/347.

⁵⁸² *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/340.

⁵⁸³ *Aṣḥāb ar-Rasool*, 2/209.

⁵⁸⁴ *Al-Anṣār fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, p. 256.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 256.

that which you cannot consume, and build that which you do not live in, and hope for that which you can never have? 'Âd and Thamood filled the region between Busra and Aden with wealth, children and cattle, but who will buy from what they left behind for two *dirhams*?"⁵⁸⁶ Such teachings were in harmony with 'Umar's policies which were aimed at preparing the ummah and keeping it in a state of readiness for jihad.⁵⁸⁷

Mu'âdh ibn Jabal al-Khazraji (ؓ) was a source of benefit to the people of Yemen and then to the people of Syria. 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood praised Mu'âdh ibn Jabal and told his companions: "Mu'âdh was an *Ummah* [a leader having all the good righteous qualities], or a nation, obedient to Allah, *Haneef* [i.e. to worship none but Allah], and he was not one of those who were *al-Mushrikoon* [polytheists, idolaters].» (*Qur'an* 16: 120)." They asked, "What does *ummah* mean here?" He said, "The one who teaches the people goodness." Then he said, "Do you know what *al-qânit* (obedient) means?" They said, "No." He said, "*al-Qânit* is the one who is obedient to Allah."⁵⁸⁸ Such was Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, whom Ibn Mas'ood likened to the Prophet Ibrâheem al-Khaleel (ؑ), because of his vast knowledge of fiqh and his high standard of good manners. Mu'âdh was distinguished by his deep understanding of Islam, which gave him the ability to respond to difficult questions, and this earned him the acceptance and admiration of the Muslims.⁵⁸⁹ 'Umar said of him: "Women are no longer able to bear sons like Mu'âdh."⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁶ *Al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 3/311.

⁵⁸⁷ *Al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*, p. 120.

⁵⁸⁸ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 1/450.

⁵⁸⁹ *Al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*, p. 285.

⁵⁹⁰ *Tahdheeb al-Kamâl*, 28/113, by al-Mazzi, quoting from *al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*.

When 'Umar was faced with difficult issues, he would consult the people of *shoorā* including Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Zayd ibn Thābit from among the Anṣār⁵⁹¹, because of their knowledge of fiqh and *tafseer*, and because of their realistic and practical understanding of events, and their experience, because they had issued *fatwas* at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) loved to listen to the conversations of Mu'ādh and Abu ad-Dardā', and he would say: "Tell us about the two wise men." It would be said, "Which two wise men?" He would say, "Mu'ādh and Abu ad-Dardā'." ⁵⁹²

When the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb delivered a *khuṭbah* in al-Jābiyah, he said: "Whoever wants to ask about fiqh, let him go to Mu'ādh ibn Jabal." ⁵⁹³ At the beginning of Abu Bakr's reign, it was 'Umar's view that the caliphate could not do without the presence of Mu'ādh ibn Jabal in its capital, and he was opposed to sending Mu'ādh out of Madeenah. After Mu'ādh left for Syria, he used to say: "His departure is a great loss to Madeenah and its people in the area of fiqh, because they have lost his ability to issue fatwas to the people of Madeenah. I used to tell Abu Bakr to keep him here because the people need him, but he insisted and said: 'A man who desires martyrdom should not be kept behind.' I said, 'By Allah, a man may be granted martyrdom when he is in his own bed.'" ⁵⁹⁴

It seems that 'Umar changed his mind after that, for he sent him to teach the people of Syria and approved of his staying there. Mu'ādh's going to Syria had a great impact because of the knowledge and fiqh that he left behind. Abu Muslim al-Khawḷānī said: "I entered

⁵⁹¹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/426.

⁵⁹² *Al-Anṣār fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, p. 285.

⁵⁹³ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 1/452.

⁵⁹⁴ *Al-Anṣār fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, p. 285; *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 1/285.

the mosque of Homs and saw nearly thirty old men of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), among whom was a young man with kohl on his eyes and bright teeth, who was silent and did not speak. If the people were not sure about something, they would ask him. I said to someone who was sitting beside me: "Who is this?" He said, "Mu'âdh ibn Jabal."⁵⁹⁵

Mu'âdh encouraged the people to seek knowledge, and he said: "Seek knowledge, for learning for the sake of Allah is piety, seeking it is worship, discussing it is *tasbeeh*, pursuing it is jihad, and teaching it to one who does not know it is charity. Knowledge shows us what is *halâl* and what is *harâm*, and is the beacon of the people of Paradise. It brings comfort when one is lonely and shows the correct way to behave at times of ease and times of hardship. It is a weapon against one's enemies. Allah raises people (in status) because of it and makes them among the elite, leaders whose example is followed and whose opinion is adopted."⁵⁹⁶

He stayed in Syria, teaching the people their religion, until he was stricken with the plague of 'Amwâs (Emmaus). His companions wept over him and he said: "Why are you weeping?" They said: "We are weeping for the knowledge which will be cut off when you die." He said: "Knowledge and faith will abide until the Day of Resurrection. Whoever seeks them will find them in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Check everything you hear against the Qur'an, but do not check the Qur'an against anything that you hear."⁵⁹⁷ For Mu'âdh, the Qur'an was the standard against which everything else was to be measured, but it was not to be measured against anything else. This was Mu'âdh's method in teaching the Qur'an, which he adhered to

⁵⁹⁵ *Al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*, p. 285.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 285; *Hilyah al-Awliya'*, 1/239.

⁵⁹⁷ *Şifat aş-Şafwah*, 1/501; *al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*, p. 84.

until the last moment of his life. As he was dying, each time he regained consciousness and opened his eyes, he would say: "My Lord, let me die the way You want, for by Your Glory, You know that my heart loves You."⁵⁹⁸

'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit was sent to Syria by 'Umar as a judge and teacher. He stayed in Homs, then he moved to Palestine where he was appointed as the *qāḍi* (judge) and settled there. He was the first one to be appointed as the judge of Palestine, and he also taught its people the Qur'an, and he stayed there until he died.⁵⁹⁹

'Ubādah played a great role in carrying out 'Umar's policies in the fields of education and jihad. He was one of those who live an ascetic and rough life. When he came to Homs he said to its people: "This world is transient but present, and the Hereafter is a true promise. This world has its children and the Hereafter has its children, so be children of the Hereafter and do not be children of this world, for every mother is followed by her children."⁶⁰⁰

These were ideas which 'Umar was keen to instill in the hearts of the Muslims, and he chose those among the *Ṣaḥābah* who could remind the people of them and embody them in their own lives. 'Ubādah would enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, without worrying whether anyone criticized him. When he was a judge in Palestine, he criticized the governor of Syria for something and said: "I will never stay in the same land as you." He went to Madeenah and 'Umar said, "What brings you here?" He told him, and 'Umar said: "Go back. What a bad and is the land where there are no people like you. He has no authority over you."⁶⁰¹ So he went back to Syria as a

⁵⁹⁸ *Ṣifat aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/501.

⁵⁹⁹ 'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit *Ṣaḥābi Kabeer wa Fātiḥ Mujāhid*, by Dr. Wabbah az-Zuhayli, p. 84.

⁶⁰⁰ *Al-Itifa'* by al-Kalā'i, 3/310.

⁶⁰¹ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubala'*, 2/122; *al-Anṣār fee al-'Aṣr ar-Rāshidi*, p. 124.

dâ'iyah and teacher and an example to his society.

'Umar also sent 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Ghanam al-Ash'ari to Syria to teach the people, but Mu'âdh, Abu ad-Dardâ' and 'Ubâdah were the main people he relied on to establish the school of Syria which undertook the mission of *da'wah* and teaching in that land. They had an elite group of the *Ṣaḥâbah* with them, and it was from this group that the *Tâbi'een* in Syria learned, of whom there were many but the most famous of them were 'Â'idullâh ibn 'Abdullâh Abu Idrees al-Khawlânî and Makḥool Abu 'Abdullâh ad-Dimashqî, and many others.⁶⁰²

4.2.6. The school of Egypt

Among the army of 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ (ؓ) which conquered Egypt there were many of the *Ṣaḥâbah*, but we can regard 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir as the *Ṣaḥâbi* who had the most influence on Egypt in terms of knowledge. The people of Egypt loved 'Uqbah and narrated from him, and kept close to him. Sa'd ibn Ibrâheem said: "The people of Egypt used to narrate from 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir as the people of Koofah narrated from 'Abdullâh."⁶⁰³

The Egyptians acquired knowledge from the *Ṣaḥâbah*, one of the most well known of whom was Abu al-Khayr Murshid ibn 'Abdullâh al-Yazani. He acquired knowledge from 'Uqbah, 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ⁶⁰⁴ and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr (may Allah have mercy on them).

These are the most important schools which were established through the conquests, the foundations of which were laid by 'Umar (ؓ). When 'Umar assembled an army he would send with them

⁶⁰² *Tafseer at-Tâbi'een*, 1/526-528.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid*, 1/540, 541.

⁶⁰⁴ *Hasan al-Muḥâdarah*, 1/296.

men of knowledge and fiqh to teach the soldiers about their religion and whatever they might need to know of rulings, fiqhi principles and the Qur'an.⁶⁰⁵

When the Islamic conquests spread and there was a need for educational institutions, the Islamic cities such as Koofah, Baṣra and al-Fuṣṭāṭ were founded, which in addition to being military bases and centres the troops and their families gathered also became places where scholars, *fuqaha*' and preachers gathered.⁶⁰⁶ 'Umar appointed *dā'iyaḥs* and teachers, and sent them to the conquered lands, and he clearly stated that one of the most important aims of sending governors and agents to the regions was so that they could teach the people. 'Umar delivered a *khuṭbah* in which he said: "O' Allah, I call upon You to bear witness over the governors of the regions, for I have only appointed them over them so that they may judge fairly amongst them and teach the people their religion and the Sunnah of their Prophet (ﷺ), and divide the booty amongst them."⁶⁰⁷

'Umar allocated payments from the *bayt al-māl* of the Muslims for teachers and *muftis* so that they could devote all their time to their missions of teaching and issuing *fatwas*. Even those who taught children were given a stipend by 'Umar. In Madeenah there were three teachers who taught children, and 'Umar gave each of them fifteen *dirhams* each month.⁶⁰⁸ The spread of teaching was one of the most important aims of the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. He sent people into the deserts and cities who could teach the people their religion, and he did not rely only on the efforts of the governors to spread teaching, rather he supported them with the scholars whom he sent from Madeenah, after giving them a great deal of advice. He

⁶⁰⁵ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah*, 2/712.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 2/712.

⁶⁰⁷ Muslim, hadith no. 567.

⁶⁰⁸ Narrated by al-Bayhaqī, 6/124; *as-Sulṭat at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 2/766.

sent ten of the *Ṣaḥâbah*, among whom was 'Abdullâh al-Mughfal al-Muzani, to teach the people in Baṣra.⁶⁰⁹ He also sent 'Imrân ibn Ḥuṣayn al-Khuzâ'i, who was one of the *fuqaha* of the *Ṣaḥâbah*, to Baṣra to teach the people there.⁶¹⁰

It seems that teaching in Syria was more centralized than in other regions, because when 'Umar conquered different countries, he wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, who was in charge of Baṣra, telling him to build a central mosque, and to build mosques for the tribes, who were to come to the central mosque on Fridays to attend *Jumu'ah*. And he wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, who was in charge of Koofah, with similar instructions; and he wrote to 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ, who was in charge of Egypt, with similar instructions. But he wrote to the commanders of the troops in Syria saying that they should not go to the villages and leave the cities, and that they should build one mosque in each city, and not build mosques for the tribes as the people of Koofah, Baṣra and Egypt had done.⁶¹¹

'Umar sought to appoint specialized units and send them to the regions, and he told the leaders and governors, as the conquests spread, to establish mosques in the conquered regions to be centres for the new religion, and centres of knowledge to spread Islamic culture. The mosques were among the earliest academic institutions in Islam, through which the scholars of the *Ṣaḥâbah* were mobilized to teach the ummah, according to 'Umar's strategic plan, the foundations of which had been laid down at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ).

During 'Umar's reign, the number of mosques in which *Jumu'ah* prayers were offered reached twelve thousand.⁶¹² They

⁶⁰⁹ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 273.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁶¹² *Nidhâm al-Hukoomah al-Islâmiyah*, 2/262.

played a role in teaching and disciplining the people. When the Muslims needed to set up places separate from the mosque for teaching children, 'Umar issued orders that schools be built, and he appointed men to teach and discipline the children.⁶¹³ 'Umar encouraged the students to acquire knowledge and made it easy for them; he offered financial rewards as an incentive. He wrote to some of his agents telling them to award prizes to encourage the best students, as was manifested in his orders to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ (ؓ), telling him to give some of the leftover money to those who learned the Qur'an.⁶¹⁴

'Umar encouraged those members of the ummah who devoted themselves to learning the Book of Allah and memorizing it, so they encountered nothing but support and encouragement, especially in the regions where the people were new in Islam, to make them or their children reach their fullest potential in memorizing and understanding the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). He took an interest in all the branches of knowledge that had anything to do with the Qur'an and Sunnah, especially the Arabic language. Among his sayings concerning that are:

"Learn Arabic, for it makes a person more logical and wise, and increases his chivalry."⁶¹⁵

"Learn grammar as you learn the Sunnahs and shares of inheritance."⁶¹⁶

"Learn *I'rāb al-Qur'an* (syntax) as you learn to memorize it."⁶¹⁷

"The worst of writing is that which is elongated without being clear, and the worst of reading is to say things unclearly, and the best of

⁶¹³ *As-Sulṭat at-Tanfeedhiyah*, 2/768.

⁶¹⁴ *Ashhar Mashāheer al-Islām*, 2/540, 541.

⁶¹⁵ *Mu'jam al-Udaba'*, 1/19.

⁶¹⁶ *Al-Bayān wa at-Tabyeen* by al-Jāhidh, 2/219.

⁶¹⁷ *Alif Ba'* by al-Balawi, 1/34; *Awaliyāt al-Fārooq*, p. 458.

writing is that which is clearest.”⁶¹⁸

We even see that 'Umar would punish the one who made mistakes in Arabic when he was in an important position for which he was expected to be qualified. It was narrated that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari wrote a letter to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ), and 'Umar wrote back, saying: “Your scribe who wrote to me made a spelling mistake; give him one lash of the whip.”⁶¹⁹

Ibn al-Jazwī also narrated that the scribe of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ wrote to 'Umar and he wrote *Bismillāh*, but he did not write the (letter) *seen*. 'Umar wrote to 'Amr, telling him to give him one lash with the whip. 'Amr did that, and he was asked: “What did he hit you for?” He said, “For a (letter) *seen*.”⁶²⁰

'Umar was keen that everything should be done in a perfect manner, hence he did not leave alone any matter that had to do with politics, economics, armies, teaching, literature, or any other matter that had to do with the life, glory and pride of the ummah, but he became proficient in it and gave it all his attention. The comprehensive nature of his policies and his good care of the ummah is indicated by the fact that he would be strict when it was required and he would be gentle when it was required, and by the fact that he insisted that the level of writing among his governors be of a high standard (*fusḥa*) in a nation whose constitution was the Qur'an which had been revealed in a plain Arabic tongue.⁶²¹

The military institutions which conquered Iraq, Iran, Syria, Egypt and North Africa (the *Maghrib*) were followed by groups of teachers, *faqeehs* and *dā'iyahs* who had been trained by the

⁶¹⁸ *Tadreeb ar-Rāwī* by as-Suyootī, p. 152.

⁶¹⁹ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzī, p. 151.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 151.

⁶²¹ *Awwaliyyât al-Fârooq*, p. 458.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Madeenah. 'Umar made use of these people by directing them in the most appropriate manner. These groups founded an academic movement which accompanied the conquests. The scholars of the *Ṣaḥābah* who devoted themselves to calling and teaching the people managed to establish a generation of scholars of Islam among the people of the conquered areas. They were able to overcome the language barrier, because many of the foreign peoples learned Arabic and many of the pioneers in the knowledge movement after the era of the *Ṣaḥābah* were in fact non-Arabs. The schools of knowledge and fiqh in the conquered areas had a great impact and formed a generation of scholars who transmitted the knowledge of the *Ṣaḥābah* to the ummah, thus forming a part of the chain of narration which brought the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) to the ummah. The credit for transmitting what the *Ṣaḥābah* had learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) must go — after Allah, of course — to the founders of the schools in Makkah, Madeenah, Baṣra, Koofah, Egypt and other regions.⁶²² 'Umar took an ongoing interest in the scholars and *fuqaha*, and followed the progress of their efforts until Allah blessed their efforts and they bore fruit.

4.3. 'Umar and poetry and poets

From the reports that have reached us it seems that poetry was alive and well in Madeenah at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. There is no book about the history of Arabic poetry that does not fail to mention 'Umar, especially on the topic of literary criticism. The spread of critical points of view during his time indicates that people would listen to and narrate poetry. It is well known that the writing of

⁶²² *Ad-Dawr as-Siyāsi* by aṣ-Ṣafwah, Pp. 462-463 (page 274 note 1).

literature does not depend on chains of trustworthy narrators, but it is the only source of information on literature and literary criticism at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the *Ṣaḥābah* in general and the *Tābi'een* who came after them, apart from some proverbs which were well known at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and were narrated in the books of hadith⁶²³, and the poetry such as that of an-Nābighah al-Ja'di⁶²⁴, Umayyah ibn Abi aṣ-Ṣalt and Ḥassān ibn Thābit.⁶²⁵

The source for information on poetry at the time of 'Umar is the books of literature and the men of letters, which are a rich source of information.

4.3.1. 'Umar and poetry

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was the most inclined of the Rightly Guided Caliphs to poetry and to commenting on it, and he quoted poetry on various occasions, so much so that it was said: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was hardly faced with any situation but he would quote poetry about it."⁶²⁶

It is narrated that he went out one day wearing a new cloak, and the people stared at him and he said (in verse):

"The treasure of Hormuz could not help him; 'Ād tried to be immortal but they all failed.

Where are the kings to whom riders came from all directions?

There is a cistern from which everyone drinks and we will inevitably drink from it too."

⁶²³ *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 8/126.

⁶²⁴ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm*, 2/98.

⁶²⁵ *Al-Bayân by al-Jāhīdh*, 1/241; *al-Adab fee al-Islâm*, by Nāyif Ma'roof, p. 169.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

The researcher will note that 'Umar had memorized a great deal of poetry, both ancient and contemporary, and he could recall it and quote it readily. This indicates that he had a vast and well-organized memory, because he always had something suitable on the tip of his tongue, which he could recall with ease. He even memorized poetry that expressed hatred of Islam. He recited to Ḥassân ibn Thâbit what Hind bint 'Utbah had said against Ḥamzah and the Muslims⁶²⁷, which provoked Ḥassân to retaliate in kind.

Hence we can say that 'Umar was a sensitive man of refined feelings, who could appreciate and recite poetry and express his opinions concerning it. But he was not a poet as such, as some researchers have suggested. The suggestion that he was a poet cannot be accepted by any fair-minded critic, because he lived among his people like an open book and did not conceal anything from them. He held gatherings in which he met with other people and if he had composed any poetry these people would have narrated it from him and broadcast it amongst themselves, and it would have reached us via the narrators as his life story has reached us. Moreover the earliest critics do not say anything about 'Umar being a poet, and Ibn Sallâm did not mention him in his *Ṭabaqât*, nor did Ibn Qutaybah in his book *ash-Sha'ir wa ash-Shu'ara'*. Al-Jâhidh did not mention that in his book in which he paid a great deal of attention to 'Umar's eloquence and knowledge of literature.⁶²⁸ Al-Mubarrad stated — as did Mutammam ibn Nuwayrah in his eulogy of Mâlik ibn Nuwayrah — that 'Umar said to Mutammam: "If only I could compose verse as you did when you eulogized your brother."⁶²⁹

'Umar loved that poetry that expressed the essence of Islamic life and

⁶²⁷ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, p. 209, by Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr.

⁶²⁸ Ibid, p. 210.

⁶²⁹ *Al-Kâmil fee al-Adab*, 2/300.

explained Islamic principles and did not conflict with the teachings of the new religion or stray from its values. He encouraged the Muslims to learn beautiful poetry and said: "Learn poetry for in it are good things to be sought, bad things to be eliminated and wisdom for those who seek it, and it encourages good manners."⁶³⁰

He wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, his governor in Iraq, saying: "Tell the people there to learn poetry, for it promotes good characteristics and enriches people's minds and increases knowledge of lineages."⁶³¹

He did not stop there; rather he regarded poetry as the key to people's hearts which motivated them to do good. Concerning the virtue and benefits of poetry, he said: "The best skill a man can possess is the skill of composing poetry which helps him to achieve what he wants, and by means of which he seeks the sympathy of the noble and to soften the heart of the ignoble."⁶³²

In order to make their children's education complete, he commanded parents to recite beautiful poetry to them. He said: "Teach your children swimming and archery, train them to be skilled on horseback, and teach them beautiful poetry."⁶³³

'Umar also took a keen interest in the poetry of the *Jâhiliyah*, because of its connection to the Holy Qur'an, as he said: "Hold on to your records and you will never go astray." Those who were listening to him said, "What are our records?" He said: "The poetry of the *Jâhiliyah*, for in it there is an explanation of your Book and the meanings of your language."⁶³⁴

⁶³⁰ *Adab al-Imla'* by as-Sam'âni, p. 71.

⁶³¹ *Al-'Umdah* by Abu Rasheeq, 1/15.

⁶³² *Al-Adab fee al-Islâm* by Dr. Nâyif Ma'roof, p. 171.

⁶³³ *Al-Kâmil fee al-Adab*, 1/227.

⁶³⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* by at-Tabarâni, 7/129; *al-Adab al-Islâmi*, p. 171.

This is in accordance with the attitude of his student, the interpreter of the Qur'an 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, who said: "If you read something in the Book of Allah which you do not understand, seek it in the poetry of the Arabs, for poetry is the record of the Arabs." ⁶³⁵

'Umar believed that poetry was the soundest kind of knowledge from the *Jāhili* era. It is narrated that he said: "Poetry was the knowledge of the people, and they did not have any sounder knowledge than it. Then Islam came and the Arabs were distracted from poetry by jihad and fighting the Byzantines, and they did not narrate poetry. When Islam prevailed and the conquests came and the Arabs settled in the regions, they went back to narrating poetry, but they could not find anything written down, but they got used to that. Then many of the Arabs died or were killed, so only a little of it was left and most of it was lost." ⁶³⁶

'Umar loved those poets who filled his heart with faith and sublime Islamic values, and put those values in verse which reflected a true commitment to Islam and spoke of the virtues encouraged by Islam. As for any other kind of poetry that went against that, 'Umar rejected it and disapproved of it, and took a strict stance against such poets. What helped him to distinguish between the two types was his well-honed sensitivity and his good taste, which went straight to the heart of the text and explored the values that were compatible with Islam and did not go against its teachings. ⁶³⁷

⁶³⁵ *Al-Adab al-Islāmi*, p. 171; *al-'Umdah* by Ibn Rasheeq, 1/17.

⁶³⁶ *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shu'ara'* by Ibn Sallām, 1/25; *Adab Ṣadr al-Islām*, p. 87.

⁶³⁷ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 218.

4.3.2. 'Umar and Ḥuṭay'ah and az-Zabarqân ibn Badr

It is narrated that the poet al-Ḥuṭay'ah — Abu Mulaykah — Jarwal ibn Aws from Banu Quṭay'ah ibn 'Abas was on his way to Iraq, fleeing from famine with his family and seeking to survive. He met az-Zabarqân ibn Badr ibn Imru' al-Qays ibn Khalaf at-Tameemi as-Sa'di⁶³⁸, who was on his way to 'Umar with the zakah of his people. Az-Zabarqân recognized him and spoke with him, and realized what his situation was. So he asked him to stay with his people and wait for him to come back. So al-Ḥuṭay'ah stayed with them, but Bagheḍ ibn 'Âmir ibn Shammâs ibn Lu'ayy ibn Ja'far Anf an-Nâqah, who was an enemy of az-Zabarqân, managed to turn him against him and win him over to his side. He incited him against az-Zabarqân, and he started to lampoon him in verse and praise Banu Anf an-Nâqah. These insults filled many stanzas, one of which az-Zabarqân sent to 'Umar, in which al-Ḥuṭay'ah said:

“Do not bother with ambition; do not travel to achieve what you aspire to.

Sit down and you will be fed and clothed.”

He complained to 'Umar and said: “He has lampooned me in verse.” 'Umar said, “What did he say?” He said, “He said to me, ‘Do not bother with ambition...’” and quoted the lines of verse. 'Umar said: “I cannot see any insult here; it is just a rebuke.” Az-Zabarqân said: “Is all my ambition simply to be fed and clothed?” 'Umar said: “Bring Ḥassân to me.” So Ḥassân was brought and he asked him about it. He said: “He did not lampoon him, he defecated on him.” So 'Umar imprisoned him.⁶³⁹ 'Umar was the most knowledgeable of people concerning poetry, but in this case, when he was acting as a judge, he called on the help of experts in the field to give testimony,

⁶³⁸ Op. cit., p. 219.

⁶³⁹ *Al-Adab fee al-Islâm*, p. 172.

then he issued his ruling. Al-'Aqqād said of 'Umar in this case: "He put aside the fact that he himself was well-versed in poetry and used to narrate it; all he was thinking of was that he was the judge who tried to avoid punishments if there was any doubt, and he did not judge according to what he knew without consulting those who were highly skilled in that field."⁶⁴⁰

When 'Umar was in prison, he started to seek 'Umar's pity by writing poetry in which he denied what he was alleged to have done, but 'Umar did not accept his apology until he wrote more lines in which he spoke eloquently of his children, whom he described as little chicks with no feathers and no one to feed them or take care of them, because he was their only breadwinner, but he had been cast into this dark place, and he asked 'Umar to pardon him.

'Umar wept, moved by these lines of verse, and ordered that he be released. In order to silence him, he bought the honour of the Muslims for three thousand *dirhams*. Al-Ḥuṭay'ah composed more poetry complaining about that.

It seems that al-Ḥuṭay'ah was not convinced deep down that he should stop composing insulting poetry, so 'Umar summoned him, sat him down in front of him and threatened to cut out his tongue. Al-Ḥuṭay'ah said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, by Allah, I have lampooned my father and my mother, I have lampooned my wife and I have lampooned myself." 'Umar smiled and let him off.⁶⁴¹ Al-Ḥuṭay'ah stopped writing insulting poetry for the rest of 'Umar's reign.

There is another, similar, incident that was narrated by the author of *Zahr al-Ādāb*, where he said: "Banu al-'Ajlān were proud of their name, because their ancestor 'Abdullāh ibn Ka'b had been

⁶⁴⁰ 'Abqariyah: 'Umar, p. 246.

⁶⁴¹ *Al-Kāmil fee al-Adab*, 2/725.

given the name of al-'Ajlân because of his haste (*ta'jeel*) in bringing food and drink to his guests. It was an honour for them, until an-Najâshi — whose name was Qays ibn 'Amr ibn Ka'b — lampooned them in a verse in which he suggested that the name had come about when others told him, "O' slave, go and milk this animal and be quick about it!"

The narrators say that Banu al-'Ajlân complained about an-Najâshi to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb about these lines, and he imprisoned him, and it was said that he whipped him too.⁶⁴²

The caliph 'Umar punished people for lampooning others in verse, but he also punished people for other types of poetry, such as casting aspersions on the Muslims' honour, provoking hatred among the Muslims, and speaking of Muslim women in poems.⁶⁴³

4.3.3. Poetry turned 'Umar's strictness into gentleness and pity

Umayyah ibn al-Askar al-Kinâni — who was one of the leaders of his people and had a son called Kilâb — migrated to Madeenah during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and stayed there for a while. One day he met Ṭalhah ibn 'Ubaydullâh and az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm and asked them: "What deeds are best in Islam?" He said, "Jihad." He asked 'Umar to let him join the troops who were going to fight in Persia. Umayyah stood up and said to 'Umar, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, this day I would join the jihad, were it not for my old age." His son Kilâb, who was a devout worshipper and an ascetic, stood up and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I will sell my soul to Allah and I will sell this world for

⁶⁴² *Zahr al-Âdâb* by al-Qayrawâni, 1/54; *al-Adab fee al-Islâm*, p. 92.

⁶⁴³ *Adab Šadr al-Islâm*, by Dr. Wâḍiḥ aš-Šamad, Pp. 92, 93.

my Hereafter." His father clung to him in the shade of the palm trees and said, "Do not leave your father and mother old and weak, who brought you up when you were small and now when they need you, you want to leave them." He said, "But I am leaving them for something that is better for me." And he went out to fight, after asking for his father's approval. His father was in the shade of the palm trees and there was a pigeon calling her chicks. The old man saw it and wept, and the old woman saw it and wept.

Umayyah was blind, so his guide took him by the hand and led him to 'Umar, who was in the mosque. The old man composed lines of verse asking 'Umar to bring his son back. 'Umar wept and wrote to Abu Moosa, ordering him to send Kilāb to him, and he sent him straight away. He came to 'Umar, who told him to come in, then he sent for Umayyah and spoke with him for a while, then he asked him what would be the best thing that he could have that day. He said: "For Kilāb to be with me so that I could smell him." He told Kilāb to come out to him, and the old man got up and started smelling his son and weeping, and 'Umar started weeping.⁶⁴⁴ Those who were present wept too and said to Kilāb: "Stay with your parents and strive to please them as long as they are alive, then you can do whatever you like after they are gone." 'Umar ordered that he be granted a stipend and let him go with his father. Kilāb was one of the best of the Muslims, and he stayed with his parents until they died.⁶⁴⁵

A similar incident occurred when the well-known poet Shaybān ibn al-Mukhabbal as-Sa'di went with Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqās to fight the Persians. His father al-Mukhabbal, who was old and weak, was very scared for him, and he could not bear his absence. He composed lines of verse in which he expressed his sorrow and fears.

⁶⁴⁴ *Al-Adab al-Islāmi*, by Dr. Nāyif Ma'roof, p. 180.

⁶⁴⁵ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Dr. Muhammad Abu 'an-Naṣr, p. 228.

When 'Umar heard them, he felt sorry for him and wept. He wrote to Sa'd, telling him to send Shaybân back, so he sent him back to his father.⁶⁴⁶

This was not the last incident of this kind, when 'Umar was moved by poetry. Many such incidents have been narrated, such as when Kharrâsh ibn Abi Kharrâsh al-Hudhali migrated during the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and went out with the Muslims on a military campaign that penetrated deep into the enemy's land. Abu Kharrâsh came to Madeenah, where he sat before 'Umar and complained to him of how much he missed his son, telling him that he was a man whose family had all died and whose brothers had been killed, and he had no supporter or helper left except his son Kharrâsh, who had left him and gone out campaigning with the Muslims. He recited lines of poetry expressing these feelings. 'Umar was moved, and he wrote a letter instructing that Kharrâsh be sent back to his father. He also issued instructions that anyone who had an elderly father should not go out to fight unless he gave him permission.⁶⁴⁷

Thus we may note that 'Umar was moved by poetry, and because he was so moved, he would weep, even though he was the one who was known for his toughness and determination. This is indicative of sensitive and humane feelings, because he felt empathy for the elderly and feeble fathers who needed their sons. Similarly, he felt empathy for all those who were oppressed or helpless, and could feel what they felt, as we have seen above with regard to poetry which lampooned others.⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁶ *Adab Šadr al-Islâm*, p. 90.

⁶⁴⁷ *Al-Aghâni* by al-Aṣḫabâni, 13/189.

⁶⁴⁸ *Adab Šadr al-Islâm*, p. 90.

4.3.4. 'Umar's talent in evaluating poetry

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was one of those who were most deeply influenced by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), even in his view of literature and his judgement of poetry and poets. There are many reports of his commenting on and critiquing literary texts, most of which reports stem from the time of his caliphate, i.e., during the last ten years of his life. These reports demonstrate how much he appreciated literature, when he had developed a complete and mature view as the result of a lifetime of education and experience. Hence we should examine the factors and circumstances that helped to develop and perfect his critical senses, taking into account the two halves of his life — *jāhili* and Islamic — as follows:

During the *Jāhiliyah*, 'Umar was one of those who were responsible for guarding the values of the *Jāhiliyah*. He enjoyed a high position among Quraysh who at that time played a central role among the other Arabs, who looked up to them and loved them. The same was true in Islam, during the caliphate of 'Umar.

'Umar was well-versed in Arabic poetry, both *jāhili* and Islamic, and he understood clearly what the *mushrikeen*, apostates and enemies of Islam said in verse against this new religion.

'Umar was knowledgeable about all aspects of Arab life both during the *Jāhiliyah* and in Islam. He knew about their beliefs, history, lineages, conduct and knowledge, which enabled him to critique words and express his opinion about them.

From an early age 'Umar was keen to join literary circles, in which there were always chatter, recitation of poetry and discussions about it, appreciating it and commenting on it. When 'Umar became Muslim, he regarded sitting with men who would select the best words in conversation as they would select the best fruits, as one of the three things that made him appreciate this world, after prayer and

jihad for the sake of Allah. 'Umar was also one of those who spent time in conversation with the Prophet (ﷺ). When he was caliph, he established a meeting place at the side of the mosque which was called *al-Baṭ-ḥa'*, which was attended by lovers and students of poetry.⁶⁴⁹

'Umar, the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), was far-sighted, brilliant, extraordinarily intelligent and inspired, which made him grasp the right meaning of things, and he was hardly ever wrong. In addition to that, he had the capacity to be moved deeply by fine verse, for which he would express his appreciation and admiration. It was narrated that Mutammam ibn Nuwayrah eulogized his brother Mâlik, who had met his end at the hands of the troops of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed during the Riddah wars, and 'Umar was so moved by his words that he went to him and said: "I wish I had eulogized my brother Zayd ibn al-Khaṭṭâb as you have eulogized your brother Mâlik." He said to him: "O' Abu Ḥaṣṣ, by Allah, if I had known that my brother would end up where your brother ended up, I would have had no need to eulogize him⁶⁵⁰." 'Umar said: "No one has ever consoled me as you did."⁶⁵¹

It was narrated that 'Umar said to one of the sons of Haram ibn Sinân: "Recite to me some of what Zuhayr said praising you." So he recited it, and he said, "He was praising you and he spoke well." He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, we used to reward him generously." 'Umar said, "What you gave him has gone, but what he gave you is still there."⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁹ *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Dr. Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 244.

⁶⁵⁰ i.e., because Mâlik would end up in Hell whereas Zayd would attain Paradise.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid, p. 247; *al-Kâmil* by al-Mubarrad, 2/300.

⁶⁵² *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm wa al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, 2/106.

The standards that affected 'Umar's favouring of one text over another, or one poet over another, were standards of form. These had to do with the soundness of the language, because his taste was based on the eloquence and soundness of the Arabic. He was repelled by grammatical mistakes, and any such mistakes in a text were sufficient for him to reject it; he would even punish those who made mistakes in grammar.⁶⁵³

*Using familiar and simple words, and
avoiding obscure and complex words*

It is narrated that 'Umar would come to Zuhayr, whose poetry he liked, and the reason why he liked his poetry was that he did not use vague or unfamiliar words, and he was not long-winded, and he would not praise a man unless what he said was true.⁶⁵⁴

This explains the type of poetry that is acceptable in Islam: it is poetry that is clear in meaning, uses familiar words, is true to life and avoids exaggeration, because poetry calls people to a purpose and addresses the majority of people, so it should be intelligible.⁶⁵⁵

It is worth pointing out that the scholars of rhetoric, who subsequently wrote down the standards of rhetoric, did not go much further beyond what 'Umar stated in this regard.⁶⁵⁶

Clarity

'Umar wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and said: "What prevented me from writing you a letter was my lack of information concerning your situation with regard to your enemy. Describe to me where the Muslims are camping, and the land that is between you and

⁶⁵³ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Dr. Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 248.

⁶⁵⁴ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm wa al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, 2/102.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 2/102.

⁶⁵⁶ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, by Dr. Muhammad Abu an-Naṣr, p. 250.

al-Madâ'in as if I can see it, and give me a clear and full picture of your situation.”⁶⁵⁷ This last phrase, “Give me a clear picture” illustrates the importance of clarity of words in 'Umar's view.

The words should fit the meaning

One of the things that are narrated from 'Umar is his words: “Beware of long-windedness.”⁶⁵⁸ Imam ad-Dârimi said: “This refers to speech, by adding extra words. 'Umar wanted to avoid use of excessive words, because that dilutes the idea and distorts it.”

The beauty of the right word in the right place

'Umar was repelled by words used in the wrong place, because that distorts the meaning and undermines the beauty of the words. For example, when Suḥaym the slave of Banu al-Ḥas-ḥâs said in verse:

“Grey hair and Islam are sufficient deterrent (from sin) for a man,”

'Umar said, “If you had said Islam before grey hair, I would have liked what you said.”

That is because, with his good taste, he understood that Islam is the stronger deterrent both before one develops grey hair and after, so it should have been mentioned first, in accordance with its importance and the impact it has on people's hearts. This is what was lacking in this line of verse.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁷ *Majmoo'ah al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 414.

⁶⁵⁸ *Sunan ad-Dârimi*, 1/9, quoting from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, by Abu an-Naṣr, p. 252.

⁶⁵⁹ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah*, by Sharrâb, 2/102; 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb by Abu an-Naṣr, p. 253.

5. Infrastructure Development and Crisis Management at the Time of 'Umar

5.1. Infrastructure development

'Umar expanded the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ) and incorporated the house of al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib into it. The expansion stretched ten cubits towards the *qiblah*, twenty cubits towards the west and seventy cubits towards the north. He rebuilt it with bricks and palm leaves, made its pillars of wood and gave it a roof of palm leaves, which he stuccoed to protect the people from the rain. He forbade adorning the mosque with red or yellow lest that distract the people from their prayer.⁶⁶⁰ The mosque had a dirt floor, which he paved with stones so that it would be cleaner for those who were praying and more comfortable for walking on.⁶⁶¹

'Umar also did some simple alterations to *al-Masjid al-Harām* in Makkah. He moved *Maqām Ibrāheem* — which was attached to the Ka'bah — to the place where it is now, to make it easier for people to do *ṭawāf* and to pray, and he put the cabinet over it.⁶⁶² He bought the houses around the mosque and demolished them to add that space to the mosque. Some of the neighbours of the mosque refused to sell their houses, so he demolished them and kept the money for them to take later on. He also built low walls around the mosque so that lamps could be placed on them.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶⁰ 'Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah, p. 227; *Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, 4/98.

⁶⁶¹ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 126.

⁶⁶² 'Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah, p. 227; *Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, 8/169.

⁶⁶³ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 126; 'Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah, p. 227.

During the *Jâhiliyah*, the cover of the Ka'bah was made of leather. The Prophet (ﷺ) covered it with Yemeni cloth, then 'Umar covered it with *qibâṭi* cloth⁶⁶⁴, which is a fine, white Egyptian cloth.⁶⁶⁵

Mosques were built in the new cities during 'Umar's caliphate, when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ laid the foundations of the *Jâmi'* mosque in Koofah, 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân laid the foundations of the *Jâmi'* mosque in Baṣra, and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ laid the foundations of the *Jâmi'* mosque in al-Fuṣṭât. These large mosques were places where the Muslims came to pray and where they got to know one another and studied together, where judgements were passed and the commands of the caliph were received.⁶⁶⁶

5.1.1. Roads and means of transportation by land and sea

The caliph 'Umar allocated a share of the Muslims' public funds to strengthening the communications between the regions of the Islamic state. 'Umar set aside a large number of camels — which were a means of transportation available at that time — to make it easy for those who had no mounts to move between the Arabian Peninsula, Syria and Iraq. He also set up something known as *dâr ad-daqqeq* (lit. house of flour) which was a place where *saweeq*, dates and raisins, and other requirements of life were stored, which could be used by stranded wayfarers and guests who were strangers. On the road between Makkah and Madeenah he provided whatever travellers would need and mounts to take them from oasis to oasis. 'Umar was following the guidance of the Qur'an which suggests that

⁶⁶⁴ *Akhbâr Makkah* by al-Azraqi, 1/253; *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 126.

⁶⁶⁵ *Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 228.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

cultural development requires effective communications, which leads to security, so the traveller did not need to carry water or provisions with him.⁶⁶⁷ And 'Umar issued instructions to the tribes, generals and governors telling them to do the same.

It was narrated from Katheer ibn 'Abdullāh, from his father, that his grandfather said: "We came with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb for 'Umrah in 17 A.H., and the people of the oases on the way asked him to let them build their houses between Makkah and Madeenah, where there had been nothing before, and he gave them permission, but he stipulated that the wayfarers had more right to the water and shade."⁶⁶⁸

We also see 'Umar's interest in keeping the roads in good repair in the treaties that he made with some of his governors in the lands that had been conquered. When Nahawand was conquered, the people of the two rivers, the Bahradhān and the Dinār, came and asked Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān for protection in return for paying the *jizyah*. He wrote a treaty for the people of each river in which he said: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is what Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān gives to the people of the Dinār river. He gives them security with regard to their lives, their wealth and their land; they will not be forced to change their religion or prevented from performing their rituals⁶⁶⁹, and they are to be protected, so long as they pay the *jizyah* each year, for each person who has reached the age of puberty, each according to his means, to the Muslim governor who is appointed over them, and so long as they guide the wayfarers, maintain the roads, show hospitality for one day and one night to the Muslim troops who come to them, and are sincere. If they betray and cheat us then the treaty is broken.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ad-Dawr as-Siyāsi* by aṣ-Ṣafwāh, Pp. 189, 190.

⁶⁶⁸ *Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyah* by al-Māwirdi, Pp. 187, 188.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ashhar Mashāheer al-Islām*, 2/342.

Witnessed by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and Nu'aym ibn Muqrim; written in Muharram 19 A.H."⁶⁷⁰

From this document we can see that 'Umar understood the basic principles of civilization and he made the maintenance of roads, which is vital for any nation to engage in trade and warfare, compulsory on the people of the conquered lands. From 16 A.H. onwards, 'Umar's ambition was focused on establishing cities in Iraq, digging waterways and repairing bridges.⁶⁷¹

In 'Iyâd's treaty with the people of ar-Rahâ it says: "In the name of Allah, this is a letter from 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam to the bishop of ar-Rahâ. If you open the door of the city on the basis that you will pay me a *dinâr* and two *mudds* of wheat for every man, you, your lives and your wealth and those who are with you will be safe. You are obliged to guide those who are lost, maintain bridges and roads and be sincere towards the Muslims. Allah is my witness and Allah is sufficient as a witness."⁶⁷²

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (may Allah be pleased with him) learned that there used to be a waterway that ran between the Nile, from a place near the fortress of Babliyon to the Red Sea, which used to connect the Ḥijâz to Egypt and facilitate trade, but the Byzantines had neglected it and it had been filled in, he ordered his governor in Egypt, 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ (may Allah be pleased with him), to dig this waterway again. So it was dug again, and it became the route between the Ḥijâz and al-Fuṣṭât, the then capital of Egypt. It became a channel of trade that brought prosperity to the region between the Nile and the Red Sea once again. On the banks of this waterway in al-Fuṣṭât there were established parks, gardens and residential areas,

⁶⁷⁰ *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islâm*, 2/342.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*, 2/346.

and 'Amr called it *Khaleej Ameer al-Mu'mineen* (The Channel of the Commander of the Faithful).⁶⁷³

The governor of Egypt was able to send whatever foodstuff he wanted to Madeenah and Makkah, and Allah benefited the people of the Two Sanctuaries in this manner. Food continued to be transported in this manner until after the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez. After that, the governors neglected it and it was filled in with sand and lost.

In Iraq, a waterway was dug that covered three parasangs from al-Khawr to Baṣra, to bring water from the Tigris to Baṣra.⁶⁷⁴ These projects which dug rivers and waterways and kept the roads in good repair, and built bridges and dams, took a huge amount of wealth from the budget of the state during 'Umar's time.⁶⁷⁵

5.1.2. Establishing border posts and new cities as military bases and centres for the spread of culture

As the conquests spread further, the Muslim state at the time of 'Umar began to build cities on the borders and to make the means of transportation and development of the land easier. 'Umar also encouraged people to migrate to the centres where the troops gathered for jihad, and to move to the conquered lands in order to spread Islam and supply the *Mujāhideen* with men and weapons. The most important cities which were founded at this time⁶⁷⁶ were Baṣra, Koofah, Moṣul, al-Fuṣṭāṭ, Giza and Sirt.⁶⁷⁷ He made plans and allocated the troops on the basis of tribes and army divisions. In each city he established public facilities such as mosques and markets, and

⁶⁷³ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar* by ash-Sharqâwi, Pp. 254, 255.

⁶⁷⁴ *Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 230.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ *Iqtisâdiyât al-Ḥarb fee al-Islâm*, by Dr. Ghâzi ibn Sâlim, p. 245.

⁶⁷⁷ See *Târeekh ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah* by Dr. Jameel al-Maṣri, Pp. 333-340.

set aside common land (*al-ḥima*) for grazing the horses and camels of the *Mujāhideen*. He encouraged the people to bring their wives and children from the cities of the Hijaz and all parts of Arabia to settle in these cities, so that they would become military bases from which the armies could be mobilized and supplied, to penetrate deep into enemy land and spread the call of Islam therein.

'Umar commanded the leaders of his armies, when they drew up the plans for these cities, to make the routes between them and the capital of the caliphate easy, with no seas or rivers in between, because 'Umar was concerned about the Arabs' ignorance of sea travel at that time. But when he realized that the Muslim army in Egypt had learned how to make use of the water routes on rivers and by sea, he allowed 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ to dig a canal that connected the Nile to the Red Sea, so that food supplies could be transported to the Hijaz⁶⁷⁸, as we have stated above.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) established these cities and recruited soldiers as the state expanded and the conquests increased, and the distances between the Muslims in different areas became greater. The troops needed places where they could rest from their tiring journeys, and places where they could find shelter in the winter and when they returned from campaigns. So there were motives for building these cities. So long as the aim of conquest was to spread the call of Islam and convey it to nations, peoples and individuals, it was essential to establish Islamic life where these nations could see it in practice and these individuals could experience it. So the Islamic cities were established on an Islamic basis in which Islam could be lived out in a complete sense. Koofah, Baṣra, al-Fuṣṭāṭ and Moṣul were Islamic cities, at the centre of each of which was the mosque, with houses for the troops spread around it. In these model

⁶⁷⁸ *Iqtisādāt al-Ḥarb fee al-Islām*, p. 245.

societies, the Islamic idea showed its strength and foundations: its strength represented by the army and its foundations represented by the Book of Allah. These were societies which applied the rulings of Allah in full, to themselves and in all their affairs. They were always ready to shed blood for the sake of Allah. From these societies Islam emerged as a light to the conquered lands; it guided the inhabitants of those lands, applied justice in its rulings and accepted those who became Muslim. These were the most brilliant methods of spreading the message and presenting it to those who were not familiar with it.

No Islamic cities were built in Syria, because there were many houses there which had been abandoned by the Byzantines when they left, and which were taken over by the Muslims, so there was no need to build new ones. There were also many Arabs already in Syria, so each tribe could find relatives there.⁶⁷⁹

Among the most important cities that were founded during the time of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) were the following:

Baṣra

The meaning of the Arabic word *baṣrah* is rugged land with solid rocks; or it was said that it means pebbled land, or soft white rocks. Baṣra is a city which is located at the point where the Tigris and Euphrates meet, a meeting point which is known as *Shatt al-'Arab*.⁶⁸⁰ When it was established, 'Umar's idea of paying attention to the Arab way of life was taken into account. Its location was close to water and grazing land, between cultivated land and wilderness. The reason why the Muslims had camped there during the time of Abu Bakr was that Qutbah ibn Qatadah adh-Dhuhali or Suwayd ibn Qutbah — according to different reports — had been fighting the

⁶⁷⁹ *Tāreekh ad-Da'wah al-Islāmiyah*, by Dr. Jameel al-Maṣri, p. 333.

⁶⁸⁰ *Al-Fārooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, p. 177.

Persians, along with a number of his people, in the region of Baṣra, and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed had told him to stay there as a governor and leader in that area. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb became caliph, he appointed 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân, one of the earliest Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), as the governor and commander in that area, and said to him: "Keep the people of al-Ahwâz, Persia and Maysân busy there (by fighting them) and distract them from helping their brothers." And he commanded Qutbah (or Suwayd) to join him. So 'Utbah went with more than three hundred men and Qutbah joined him with those who were with him of Bakr ibn Wâ'il and Tameem, and camped there in *Rabee' al-Awwâl* (or *Rabee' al-Âkhir*) 14 A.H.⁶⁸¹

'Utbah consulted 'Umar with regard to establishing a city in Baṣra, and he commanded him to choose a place that was close to water and pasture land. He chose the site of Baṣra and wrote to 'Umar, saying: "I have found land that is between cultivated land and wilderness, with ponds and reeds nearby." 'Umar wrote back telling him to settle there. So he settled there and built its mosque from reeds, and built his governor's house near the mosque. The people built seven residential areas from reeds too, because there were so many available there. When they went out on a military campaign, they would pull up the reeds and stack them in piles until they came back from the campaign, then they would rebuild the houses. But the reeds were burned in a fire, so they asked 'Umar for permission to build with adobe bricks and he gave them permission; that was during the governorship of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, after 'Utbah had died in 17 A.H. Abu Moosa built the mosque and the governor's house with adobe and mud, and gave it a thatched roof. Then he rebuilt it with stones and bricks, and allocated areas to different

⁶⁸¹ *Tāreekh ad-Da'wah al-Islāmiyah*, p. 333.

tribes. He made the main streets sixty cubits wide, the other streets twenty cubits wide and the alleys seven cubits wide. In the middle of each loop of houses they left a spacious area to tie their horses and bury their dead, and the houses were joined on to one another.⁶⁸²

'Umar ordered Abu Moosa to dig a channel for the people of Baṣra, so he dug the channel of al-Ablah towards Baṣra for a distance of three parasangs.⁶⁸³

Thus the Muslims became pioneers in the area of town planning, and the Muslims of Baṣra became rich as the result of the conquests of al-Ablah, Dast and Maysân.⁶⁸⁴ People were motivated to come and settle there, and they came seeking wealth as those who came before them had come seeking jihad. So a mixture of tribes and a mixture of ambitious individuals and merchants came to Baṣra and its number of inhabitants increased greatly.⁶⁸⁵

From the historical reports, researchers have concluded the military and economic considerations that 'Umar had in mind when he founded these cities:

These cities were established on the fringes of Arab land, next to non-Arab lands, so that they could serve as strongholds which the enemy could not hope to get past.

These locations were suitable for Arabs, because the Arabs at that time formed the majority of the forces who were engaged in jihad for the sake of Allah, and they could not live anywhere unless there was grazing for their camels, as 'Umar explained.

⁶⁸² *Târeekh ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah*, p. 334.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Locations for cities were chosen at the edge of wild land belonging to the Arabs so that they could find the pastures they needed for their flocks. They chose land that was also close to non-Arab villages so that the produce of these villages, such as yoghurt, wool, grains and fruits, would be readily available. When 'Umar read the letter of 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân about the land of Başrah he said: "This is green land that is near water and pastures and firewood."⁶⁸⁶ This is indicative of sound military strategy and good planning which took into account the circumstances of both war and peace, as well as the necessity of securing a water supply and establishing short supply lines and sources of fuels such as firewood which every city needs.

It was also important to ensure that there were no natural obstacles such as rivers which would prevent support from the seat of caliphate from reaching the battlefront.⁶⁸⁷

The cities were also organized according to the tribal system of the army. Each tribe was accommodated in houses in a single neighbourhood.⁶⁸⁸

Koofah

Historians are agreed that Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâş (ؓ) is regarded as the original founder of this city. He chose its location and ordered that it be planned and laid out after a series of victories which the Muslims achieved in their wars against the Persians in the region of al-Madâ'in. As was the case in the selection of the location for Başra, military factors played a basic role in motivating Sa'd to think of choosing a place for the *Mujâhideen* to camp⁶⁸⁹, which he did after

⁶⁸⁶ *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, p. 341.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 275.

⁶⁸⁸ *Iqtisâdiyât al-Ḥarb fee al-Islâm*, p. 247.

⁶⁸⁹ *Dirâsât fee Târeekh al-Mudun al-'Arabiyyah al-Islâmiyyah* by Dr. 'Abdul-Jabbâr Nâji, p. 183.

'Umar commanded him to do so. Sa'd's choice of a location for Koofah was in accordance with the standards laid down by 'Umar, who had noticed a change in the faces of those who came from al-Qâdisiyah and al-Madâ'in, and he realized that this was due to the bad climate. So he wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, telling him to find a place that suited them and their camels. He sent Salmân al-Fârisi and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as scouts to look for the best location for Koofah, and they found a spot between al-Ḥeerah and the Euphrates. It was so called because it was sandy and pebbly, and such land is called *koofah* in Arabic.⁶⁹⁰

So Sa'd moved from al-Madâ'in to Koofah in Muḥarram 17 A.H. 'Umar wanted the Muslims to stay in their tents because that was better for the purpose of war, and made them look ready and more frightening to their enemies. But when the people of Koofah and Baṣra asked him for permission to build with reeds, he did not want to go against their wishes and he gave them permission. So the people built with reeds, then the fires in Koofah and Baṣra destroyed the reeds, so they asked 'Umar for permission to built with adobe and he said, "Do that, but no one of you should have more than three rooms; and do not compete in constructing tall buildings." 'Umar wrote to 'Utbah and the people of Baṣra with similar instructions. He put 'Âṣim ibn ad-Dulaf Abu al-Jardâ' in charge of the settlement and construction of Koofah, and Abu al-Hayyâj ibn Mâlik al-Asadi in charge of the settlement and construction of Baṣra. Abu al-Hayyâj planned the layout of Koofah in accordance with 'Umar's instructions. The main roads were to be forty cubits wide, secondary roads were to be thirty cubits wide, lesser roads were to be twenty cubits wide, and the alleys were to be seven cubits wide, and there was nothing narrower than that. The first thing that he planned was

⁶⁹⁰ *Târeekh ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah*, p. 335.

the city's mosque, then a skilled archer stood in the middle of the city and shot arrows to his right and his left, in front of him and behind him. Then he ordered that construction should begin outside the area defined by the arrows. In front of the mosque he built a canopy for shade which covered two hundred square cubits and was supported on columns of marble. They built a house for Sa'd near the mosque, with a roadway between the two buildings, and they put the treasury (*bayt al-mâl*) in that house. The construction was done by Roozabah al-Fârisi.⁶⁹¹

After it was founded, it was inhabited by Muslim *Mujâhideen*, then by a Persian group of four thousand, which was one of the brigades of Rustam who were known as the troops of the Shahinshah, and who sought safety to camp wherever they wanted and to make alliances with whomever they wanted, and to be given some salary. Sa'd gave them what they wanted. They had a leader whose name was Daylam, and they were known as Ḥamra' Daylam.⁶⁹²

Koofah was also settled by some of the Jews and Christians of Najrân when 'Umar expelled them from the Arabian Peninsula. They settled in an area of Koofah which became known as an-Najrâniyah.⁶⁹³

After the establishment of Baṣra and Koofah they became important and famous as centres of jihad and of knowledge and literature throughout the Muslim world. The seat of power moved there from the Ḥijaz when 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (عليه السلام) adopted Koofah as the seat of his caliphate, after the centre of Islamic power moved to the cities in general.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹¹ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/17.

⁶⁹² *Târeekh ad-Da'wah*, p. 336.

⁶⁹³ *Târeekh ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah*, p. 336.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 338.

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) based the planning of Baṣra and Koofah on sound principles, making the roads wide and well organized, which is indicative of his brilliance in the field of construction. Koofah combined the role of a city with the fresh air and earth of the countryside, which was more healthy and comfortable, because wide roads in the city act like lungs in the body. 'Umar wanted those who settled in Koofah to live in tents because it would be quicker to mobilize them when needed and more alarming in the eyes of the enemy, but subsequent developments led to the city being built of bricks.⁶⁹⁵

'Umar's fear that the Muslims would start to indulge in a life of luxury and ease

'Umar feared that the Muslims would start to indulge in a life of luxury and ease, which would lead to regrettable consequences in this world and in the Hereafter. When people settled in Koofah and Baṣra, they went back to their old habits. Then the people of Koofah asked for permission to build with reeds, and the people of Baṣrah did likewise. 'Umar said: "Tents are better for you, because you are in a state of war, but I do not want to go against your wishes. What are reeds?" They explained that to him, and he said: "It is up to you." So the people of the two cities built houses with reeds.⁶⁹⁶

Then fires broke out in Koofah and Baṣra, and the worst hit of the two was Koofah, where eighty houses were burned and there was nothing left. The people kept on talking about that, and Sa'd sent a group of them to 'Umar, to ask him for permission to build with adobe bricks. They came to him with news of the fire and what had happened to them — and they never did anything or refrained from anything without consulting him. He said, "Do that, but no one of

⁶⁹⁵ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon*, p.182.

⁶⁹⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/15.

you should have more than three rooms, and do not compete in constructing lofty buildings. Adhere to the Sunnah and you will prevail." So the people went back to Koofah with this message, and 'Umar wrote to 'Utbah and the people of Baṣrah with a similar message. 'Umar also advised that delegation, and asked the people in general, not to make their buildings any taller than what is reasonable. They said: "What is reasonable?" He said: "That which does not bring you close to extravagance and which serves the intended purpose."⁶⁹⁷

From this report it is obvious that those people did not care about worldly show. All they wanted in their dwellings was protection from the sun, rain, cold and heat, and they did not care about having palaces or lofty houses. Hence they chose to build with reeds, which were the easiest things available to them, until they were forced to build with mud bricks. But nevertheless we see 'Umar imposing restrictions on them, to prevent them competing in constructing lofty buildings. This is indicative of his farsightedness concerning the wealth which he expected the ummah to acquire after the conquests. With these and similar instructions he sought to check the ummah's rush towards extravagance and luxury, and to make it live a life of moderation. From the words of 'Umar it is clear that what is meant by the kind of construction in which there is no goodness is that which is luxurious and goes beyond the level of moderation. One of the greatest manifestations of extravagance is competing in the construction of lofty buildings, because construction consumes a great deal of a person's wealth and time, and if a person focuses on it, it will dominate his thoughts and become the major concern with some people.⁶⁹⁸ 'Umar was worried about the worldly gains made by the ummah during his reign, and he

⁶⁹⁷ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/16.

⁶⁹⁸ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19, 20/22.

tried to prevent them from indulging in that. He wanted the construction of houses to be a simple matter that could be achieved within a short period of time. Nowadays building a house may take years and put a person in debt which he does whatever he can to pay off; years may pass without him paying a penny in zakah even though he is regarded as well off, because the palaces that most people aspire to require high quality furniture and other extravagances that drain the energy of the one who seeks them and keep him working hard for many years as he seeks to compete with others in worldly matters. In the midst of this competition, he neglects some of the essential duties of Islam, such as the financial acts of worship, chief among which is zakah and spending on the *Mujāhideen* who are striving for the sake of Allah. People may also be distracted by such worldly pursuits from other important duties such as prayer and seeking knowledge.⁶⁹⁹

"That which does not bring you close to extravagance and which serves the intended purpose"

This means that the kind of construction that is allowed in Islam is that which does not bring a person close to extravagance and does not go beyond the limit prescribed in Islam or go beyond the bounds of moderation. 'Umar did not strictly define that for them, because each land has its own customs as to what constitutes extravagance, moderation and stinginess. So what is moderate is to be defined according to the prevailing custom in the land among the middle ranks of those who are righteous in terms of worldly matters.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19, 20/22.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 19, 20/23.

"Adhere to the Sunnah and you will prevail"

This means that adherence to the way of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is a cause of prevailing over the people and being given power in the land, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to [the present rulers] in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them [i.e. Islam]. And He will surely, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear [provided] they [believers] worship Me and do not associate anything [in worship] with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the *Fâsiqoon* [rebellious, disobedient to Allah].»
(*Qur'an* 24: 55)

'Umar encouraged people to shun worldly gains even though at that time the Muslims were competing with one another in asceticism and shunning worldly gains. So how about those who came after them, who competed with one another in worldly gains? 'Umar was also keen to tackle the issue of materialistic accumulation at his time, when Persia and parts of the Byzantine lands had been conquered and Allah had granted a great deal of wealth to the Muslims from the booty acquired through conquest and the taxes acquired from those lands. He delivered an eloquent *khutbah* in which he described the new situation and advised the Muslims to follow the better way.

He said: "Allah — All-Glory and Praise be to Him — has made it obligatory upon you to give thanks, and He has established proof by guiding you to the honour of this world and the Hereafter, without you asking for it or desiring it. He created you from nothing so that you might worship Him, and He was able to make you the least significant of His creation, but He made most of His creation for

you and did not create you for anyone else but Himself. He has subjugated for you everything that is on land and sea, and has granted you goodly provision so that you might give thanks. Then He gave you hearing and sight. Some of His blessings are granted to all the sons of Adam and some are granted only to the followers of your religion. Now these blessings have all fallen under your control in your time. There is not a single blessing that has come to any specific person but if it were to be divided among all the people they would have to strive hard to give proper thanks for it, and they would not be able to do so without the help of Allah and without believing in Allah and His Messenger. You have been granted authority in the land and are subjugating its people. Allah has granted victory to your religion, and there are only two types of people left: those who have become subjugated to Islam and its people, who pay the *jizyah* to you from the best of their wealth, who work hard and you benefit; and those who are expecting the decree of Allah to befall them at any moment, day or night, whose hearts are filled with fear; they have nowhere to run or hide, for the troops of Allah are about to attack and will soon conquer their lands. With the abundance of wealth, continuing conquests, guarding the borders by Allah's leave, with the general well being which has never been experienced since the beginning of Islam, Allah is to be praised for the great conquests in every land. What thanks can there be in comparison to all these innumerable blessings? No one can give sufficient thanks except with the help and mercy of Allah. We ask Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, to bestow this upon us, to help us to obey Him and hasten to please Him. O' slaves of Allah, remember Allah's blessings to you and praise Him for His favours. Allah (ﷻ) said to Moosa:

﴿... Bring out your people from darkness into light, and remind them of the annals of Allah...﴾ (Qur'an 14: 5)

And He said to Muhammad (ﷺ):

﴿And remember when you were few and were reckoned weak in the land...﴾ (Qur'an 8: 26)

If you had been reckoned weak in the land and were deprived of the good of this world whilst adhering to a branch of faith and believing in it, finding comfort in it and having knowledge of Allah and His religion, putting your hopes in the Hereafter, that would have been fine. But you were living a hard life and were ignorant of Allah. If Islam had been the only thing that Allah had given you and there were no worldly blessings with it except that blessing in the Hereafter where everyone will end up, and you had faced hardship in life as you did before you became Muslim, then you should be very keen to adhere to Islam and support it against all others. So how about when you have been granted the best of this world and of the Hereafter, and whoever among you want to do so may have both? I remind you that Allah knows what is in your hearts, so you should remember the rights of Allah and strive for His sake, and force yourselves to obey Him. Try to combine your delight in these blessings with the fear that they may disappear and be taken away... It is my duty before Allah to enjoin upon you that which is good and to forbid to you that which is evil.”⁷⁰¹

Al-Fuṣṭāṭ

If Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ is regarded as the founder of Koofah, 'Amr ibn al-ʿÂṣ is regarded as the founder of al-Fuṣṭāṭ. After he had conquered Alexandria, he wanted to settle there, but 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to him, saying: “Do not let there be any water between me and you, so that I can come to you.” So he moved from Alexandria to al-Fuṣṭāṭ.⁷⁰²

⁷⁰¹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/211, 212, 213.

⁷⁰² *Futooḥ Miṣr* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, p. 91. It is called al-Fuṣṭāṭ because he set up his tents (*fusṭāt*) there.

The first thing he did there was to build its mosque which was named after him, like the mosque that he built in Alexandria. Then he built a house for 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, which he probably intended to be for the caliphs. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote to him and told him to make it a marketplace for the Muslims.⁷⁰³ 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ built two houses for himself near the mosque, as Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam tells us: " 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ laid the foundations for his house which is now at the gate of the mosque, with the road running between them and his other house, which is attached to the side of it."⁷⁰⁴ He may have built one house for himself and the other as an administration building, after 'Umar had told him to demolish the house mentioned above.

'Amr ibn al-Āṣ delegated a number of senior *Ṣaḥâbah* who were with him to allocate an area for the houses of each tribe, and these areas were clearly delineated, like quarters or neighbourhoods nowadays. But they were not so big as to have roads between one tribe and another. They were probably not roads as we know them nowadays but rather small footpaths between one quarter and the next. That group of *Ṣaḥâbah* was composed of Mu'âwiyah ibn Khadeej at-Tajaybi, Shareek ibn Summi al-Ghuṭayfi, 'Amr ibn Maḥram al-Khawḷânî and Huwayl ibn Nâshirah al-Mu'âfirî. They are the ones who allocated land to different tribes in 21 A.H.⁷⁰⁵ Although we do not have room here to list all the neighbourhoods, we may mention some of them, such as: Aslam, al-Laytoon, Bani Mu'âdh, Bali, Bani Baḥr, Mahrah, Lakhm, Ghâfiq, aṣ-Ṣadaf, Ḥaḍramawt, Tajeel, Khawḷân, Mudhḥaj, Murâd, Yâfi', Mu'âfir and al-Ash'ariyoon.⁷⁰⁶ From these names the researcher will see that many

⁷⁰³ 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi, p. 135.

⁷⁰⁴ *Futoḥ Miṣr*, Pp. 96-97.

⁷⁰⁵ 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi, p. 136.

⁷⁰⁶ *Futoḥ Miṣr*, Pp. 115-129.

tribes — Arabs and otherwise — took part in the conquest of Egypt, hence there were many quarters formed of these tribes. Each tribe wanted to have its own area where it could run its own affairs. We also learn that the plans approved by 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ to divide the land among these tribes were well thought out.⁷⁰⁷ Each tribe built a mosque in the middle of its area. In his book *al-Faḍā'il al-Bâhiraḥ fee Maḥâsin Maṣr wa al-Qâhiraḥ*, Ibn Zaheerah quoted Ibn Zawlâq's comments on the early mosques of al-Fuṣṭât. He said that the first mosque was that of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, then he listed other mosques that were named after individuals⁷⁰⁸, after which he said: "Apart from those that we have mentioned, there are two hundred and thirty-three other mosques that were built by the *Ṣaḥâbah* when they conquered Egypt, and they were built to accommodate each tribe."⁷⁰⁹

'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ did well in his choice of location, because it facilitated contact with the caliphate as well as being centrally located between the north and south of the country and close to the Nile.⁷¹⁰

Sirt in Libya

After Barqah became a base for Islam in the west of Egypt, 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and his troops set out from there for Tripoli. He began with the city of Sirt which is between Barqah and Tripoli and took control of it. The Muslims adopted it as a base for expeditions to the west from 22 A.H., and it remained a base for the Muslim forces and was a centre for 'Uqbah ibn Nâfi' whose main aim was to spread Islam in the nearby oases of Fazzân, Waddân, Zuwaylah and Sudan.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁷ 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ *al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi*, p. 137.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ahl al-Fuṣṭât* by Dr. Ṣâliḥ Aḥmad al-ʿAlī, p. 38.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁷¹⁰ *Tāreekh ad-Da'wah al-Islāmiyah*, by Dr. Jameel al-Miṣr, p. 339.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

Garrisons stationed in the conquered cities

'Umar set up garrisons in the conquered cities throughout the conquered lands, especially in Syria. They had barracks where the soldiers stayed and in every camp there were stables for the horses, in which there were no less than four thousand horses with all their equipment which was kept in a state of readiness⁷¹², so that if necessary the generals could head out for the battlefield within the shortest time, with more than 36 thousand horsemen in one go in Syria alone. In each garrison, a huge area was set aside for these horses to graze. Each horse was marked on its thigh with the words *Jaysh fee sabeel-illâh* (an army for the sake of Allah), in accordance with the verse:

﴿And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know...﴾

(*Qur'an* 8: 60)

Garrisons in Syria

These garrisons in Syria included the following:

The garrison of Damascus:

During 'Umar's time this garrison was commanded by three people who were, in order: Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, Suwayd ibn Kulthoom, and Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân.

The garrison of Homs:

It was commanded by Abu 'Ubaydah 'Âmir ibn al-Jarrâh, then by 'Ubâdah ibn aş-Şâmit, then by 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam, then by Sa'd ibn 'Âmir ibn Hudhaym, then by 'Umayr ibn Sa'd, then by 'Abdullâh ibn Qarat.

⁷¹² *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/138; *Târeekh ad-Da'wah*, p. 341.

The garrison of Qinnasreen:

It was commanded by Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, then by 'Umayr ibn Sa'd.

The garrison of Palestine:

This was headed by Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, then by 'Alqimah ibn Majzaz.

The garrison of Jordan:

The centre of which was Tiberias, was commanded by Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah, then by Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, then by Mu'âwiyah. Mu'âwiyah took charge of the garrisons of Damascus and Jordan after Yazeed died in the plague of 'Amwâs.⁷¹³

The desire for jihad and seeking the pleasure of Allah motivated many of the *Ṣaḥâbah* and the scholars among the *Tâbi'een* to move to these cities, which were called *thughoor* (outposts) and spread the call of Islam and jihad for the sake of Allah, and teach the people the Qur'an and Sunnah. Madeenah, Baṣra, Koofah, Damascus and al-Fuṣṭât all became areas which attracted people to come and settle in them, seeking knowledge and jihad, or seeking to enlist in the army and be given a stipend, or to engage in trade and learn new skills. Thus these cities became beacons of culture and development in which all branches of knowledge flourished and all kinds of skills and professions developed.⁷¹⁴

⁷¹³ Op. cit., p. 341.

⁷¹⁴ *Iqtisâdiyât al-Ḥarb fee al-Islâm*, p. 250.

5.2. Economic crisis (the year of ar-Ramâdah)

During the reign of 'Umar the Islamic state was faced with severe trials. This is something that all nations, states, peoples and societies must inevitably undergo, and the Muslim ummah is one of these nations. The laws of Allah do not change or alter. Among the greatest trials that were faced at the time of 'Umar were the year of ar-Ramâdah and the plague of 'Amwâs. In this section we will discuss how 'Umar dealt with these crises and the measures he took, how he beseeched Allah and called upon Him. In 18 A.H. the Arabian Peninsula was struck by a severe famine and drought, and hunger grew so severe that the wild animals started coming into the towns, and if a man slaughtered a sheep he would not be able to eat it because it was so scrawny, and the flocks died of hunger. This year was called the year of ar-Ramâdah because the wind blew the dust around like ashes (ar-ramâd). The drought was severe and there was no food to be had. The people flocked from the farthest deserts to Madeenah to stay in the city or nearby, seeking a solution with the caliph. 'Umar felt the impact of this calamity more than anyone else, and he was well aware of the burden of responsibility.⁷¹⁵ It is possible to note the following steps that 'Umar took to deal with this crisis:

5.2.1. Setting an example to the people himself

During the year of ar-Ramâdah, some bread soaked in ghee was brought to 'Umar. He called a Bedouin man to eat with him, and the Bedouin started to wipe up extra ghee with his finger after each mouthful. 'Umar said to him: "It seems that you have not had any fat for a long time." The Bedouin said, "I have not eaten any ghee or

⁷¹⁵ *Fann al-Hukm*, 68; *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/98; *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/75.

olive oil, nor have I seen anyone eating them, since such and such a time until today." 'Umar swore that he would not taste any meat or ghee until the famine was over and the people went back to normal. The narrators are unanimously agreed that 'Umar was very strict in fulfilling this vow. For example, when a skin full of ghee and some yoghurt came to the market, 'Umar's slave bought them for forty *dirhams* and brought them to 'Umar and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, Allah has fulfilled your oath and your reward will be great. Some yoghurt and ghee came to the market and I bought them for forty *dirhams*." 'Umar said, "That is too expensive; give them in charity, for I do not want to eat something extravagant." Then he followed that by saying, "How could I care for the people properly if I do not feel what they feel?"⁷¹⁶

These words of 'Umar explain one of the most brilliant principles of the art of ruling that humanity has ever known: how can a ruler really care for his people if he does not feel what they feel?⁷¹⁷

During the year of *ar-ramâdah*, 'Umar was affected so much that his colour changed. It was narrated that 'Iyâd ibn Khaleefah said: "I saw 'Umar during the year of *ar-ramâdah* and his face looked black. He was an Arab man who used to eat ghee and yoghurt, but when the famine came he forbade himself to eat those things, and he ate olive oil until his colour changed and he became very hungry."⁷¹⁸ It was narrated that Aslam said: "We used to say that if Allah had not lifted the famine during the year of *ar-ramâdah*, we thought that 'Umar would have died out of concern for the Muslims."⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/78.

⁷¹⁷ *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 71.

⁷¹⁸ *At-Tabaqât*, 3/314.

⁷¹⁹ *At-Tabaqât*, 3/315; *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/363.

'Umar used to fast all the time, and during the year of ar-ramâdah, when evening came he would eat some bread soaked in olive oil. Then one day he slaughtered a camel to feed the people, and they kept the best parts for him. They brought him some of the hump and liver. He said: "Where did this come from?" They said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, it is from the camel that we slaughtered today." He said, "No, no, what a bad ruler I would be if I ate the best of it and gave its bones to the people. Take this plate away and bring me some other food." Some bread and oil was brought to him and he started to break the bread and dip it in the oil, then he said: "Woe to you, O' Yarfâ⁷²⁰; take this dish to the household of Yathmagh, for I have not been to them for three days and I think that they have nothing to eat, so give it to them."⁷²¹

This is how 'Umar was, and this is the art of ruling in Islam, where the ruler should put the people before himself so that they eat better than he does. Even though with the burdens of ruling he had to put up with more than they do, and suffer much more than they did, 'Umar did not put restrictions on himself only, rather he applied the same restrictions to the members of his family. They also had to suffer more than the people did. One day during the year of ar-ramâdah, he saw one of his sons holding a piece of watermelon and said, "No, no, O' son of the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*! How can you eat fruit when the ummah of Muhammad is starving?" The boy ran away crying, and 'Umar did not rest until he had asked him about that, and found out that his son had bought it for a handful of dates.⁷²²

⁷²⁰ Yarfâ' was 'Umar's doorkeeper, who had experienced the *Jâhiliyah* and performed Ḥajj with 'Umar during the caliphate of Abu Bakr.

⁷²¹ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/313; *ash-Shaykhân min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 294.

⁷²² *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/315; *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/363.

'Umar's awareness of the responsibility of ruling before Allah overwhelmed him, and he did not leave any means, spiritual or worldly, of dealing with the famine and lack of rainfall, but he resorted to it. He continually prayed and asked for forgiveness, and he was always keen to provide food to the Muslims, thinking of his people, those who had come to Madeenah and those who had remained in the desert. He dealt with the whole situation in an efficient manner... After that he checked himself with brilliant harshness, until those who were around him during this crisis said: "If Allah had not lifted the famine during the year of ar-Ramâdah, we thought that 'Umar would have died out of concern for the Muslims."⁷²³

5.2.2. Refugee camps during the year of ar-Ramâdah

It was narrated that Aslam said: "During the year of ar-Ramâdah, the Arabs came from all directions to Madeenah. 'Umar ordered some men to look after them, and I heard him say one night: "Count how many people ate supper with us." So they counted them and found that there were seven thousand men. They counted the sick men and children, and there were forty thousand of them. A few days later the number of men and children reached sixty thousand. Shortly after that, Allah sent rain, and when it rained, I saw 'Umar had appointed men to take them back out to the desert, and he gave them food and lambs. But death had already begun to stalk them and I think that two-thirds of them died. The workers would set up 'Umar's cooking pots from the end of the night and make soup and a kind of bread.⁷²⁴ 'Umar divided the work up among his workers and set up an institution to help the refugees, in which every worker knew

⁷²³ *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 71; *at-Tabaqât*, 3/315.

⁷²⁴ *Târeekh adh-Dhahabi*, p. 274.

exactly what he was supposed to be doing, and did not duplicate the work assigned to someone else.⁷²⁵ He appointed people in different parts of Madeenah to check on the people who had gathered there to seek food because of the severe drought and famine that had befallen them; they would supervise the distribution of food to the people. When evening came, they would meet with him and tell him about what they had done, and he would give them further instructions.⁷²⁶

'Umar fed the Bedouins from Dâr ad-Daqeeq, which was one of the economic institutions that were set up at the time of 'Umar to distribute food to those who came to Madeenah. It distributed flour, *saweeq*, dates and raisins from the stores in Dâr ad-Daqeeq before supplies started to come from Egypt, Syria and Iraq. The Dâr ad-Daqeeq had expanded and was able to feed the tens of thousands who came to Madeenah for nine months, before the rains came and people were able to go back to normal.⁷²⁷

This is indicative of 'Umar's wisdom in developing the institutions of the state, whether financial or otherwise. He himself worked in those camps. Abu Hurayrah said: "May Allah have mercy on Ibn Ḥantamah (i.e., 'Umar). I saw him in the year of ar-ramâdah, carrying two sacks on his back and a container of oil in his hand, taking turns with Aslam to carry them. When he saw me, he said: 'Where did you come from, O' Abu Hurayrah?' I said, 'From nearby.' I started helping him and we carried those things until we reached Dirâr, where there was a group of about twenty families from (the tribe of) Muḥârib. 'Umar said, 'What brings you here?' They said, 'Hunger.' They brought out to us the baked skin of a dead animal that they had been eating, and some ground up bones that they

⁷²⁵ *Al-Kafâ'ah al-Idâriyah*, by Dr. 'Abdullâh Qâdiri, p. 107.

⁷²⁶ *Al-Kafâ'ah al-Idâriyah*, p. 115.

⁷²⁷ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm*, 2/37, 38.

had been eating. I saw 'Umar put down his cloak and start to cook for them and feed them until they had eaten their fill. Then he sent Aslam to Madeenah and he brought some camels which he gave them to ride until he brought them to al-Jabbânah. Then he gave them some clothes, and he kept checking on them and on others until Allah relieved them of that drought."⁷²⁸

'Umar would lead the people in praying '*Ishâ*', then he would go out to his house, where he would continue praying until the end of the night, then he would go out to al-Anqâb and check on the people there. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar said: "One night I heard him at the end of the night, saying, 'O' Allah, do not destroy the ummah of Muhammad during my caliphate' and, 'O' Allah, do not destroy us by famine; relieve us of this calamity,' and repeating these words."⁷²⁹

Mâlik ibn Aws (from Banu an-Naṣr) said: "In the year of ar-Ramâdah, my people came to 'Umar with one hundred families and camped in al-Jabbânah. 'Umar would feed the people who came to him, and he would send flour, dates and condiments to those who could not come to him. He used to send what my people needed month by month, and he would care for the sick among them and send shrouds for those who died. 'Umar himself would come and offer the funeral prayer for them, and I saw him praying for ten people at one time. When the famine was over, he said: "Leave the city and go back to your way of life in the desert." 'Umar gave mounts to the weak among them, until they reached their own land."⁷³⁰

⁷²⁸ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 111; quoting from *ar-Riyâḍ an-Naḍrah*.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 111.

⁷³⁰ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 112; *Ibn al-Jawzi*, p. 61.

It was narrated from Ḥazm ibn Hishām that his father said: "I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in the year of ar-ramādah passing by a woman who was making *'aṣeedah* (a gruel made of flour with butter and honey). He said, 'You do not make *'aṣeedah* like that.' Then he took the spoon and said, 'Like this,' and he showed her how, saying, 'Do not put the flour in until the water is hot; add it little by little and stir it as you are adding it, otherwise it will clump together.' One of 'Umar's wives narrated that 'Umar did not approach any of his wives (for intimacy) during the time of ar-Ramādah until the famine was over, because of his worry."⁷³¹ It was narrated that Anas said: "The stomach of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb rumbled during the year of ar-Ramādah. He used to eat olive oil and he forbade himself ghee. He patted his stomach and said, 'You may rumble, but we have no other food until the famine is over.'"⁷³²

5.2.3. Seeking help from the people in other regions

'Umar hastened to write to his governors in rich lands and ask them for help. He sent word to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, his governor in Egypt, saying: "From the slave of Allah 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ. Peace be upon you. Do you want me and those around me to die, whilst you and those around you are living a life of luxury? Help, help!" 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ wrote back to him: "To the slave of Allah *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* from 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ. Peace be upon you. I praise Allah, beside Whom there is no other god. Help is on its way, just wait. I am sending to you a caravan the first of which will reach you whilst the last of it is still with me. I also hope to find a way to send help by sea."⁷³³ He sent

⁷³¹ Op. cit., p. 116.

⁷³² *al-Hilyah*, 1/48.

⁷³³ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 115.

one thousand camels by land carrying flour, and he sent twenty ships by sea carrying flour and fat, and he sent five thousand garments to him.⁷³⁴

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) wrote to each of his governors in Syria: "Send us food to help those who are with us, for they will die unless Allah has mercy on them."⁷³⁵ And he wrote to his agents in Iraq and Persia with a similar request, and they all sent aid to him.⁷³⁶ At-Ṭabari said: "The first one to come to him was Abu 'Ubaydah with four thousand camels carrying food, and he put him in charge of distributing it to those who were around Madeenah. When he came back to him, he ordered that he be given four thousand *dirhams*. He said, 'I have no need of it, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. I was only seeking the reward of Allah and I don't want any worldly reward.' He said, 'Take it; there is nothing wrong with it if you were not seeking it.' He refused, and 'Umar said, 'Take it, for I did something similar for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said to me what I have said to you, and I said to him what you said to me, and he gave it to me.' So Abu 'Ubaydah accepted it and went away with the people who had come with him."⁷³⁷

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân sent three thousand camels carrying food, and one thousand camels carrying flour arrived from Iraq.⁷³⁸ 'Umar started to distribute this aid to the people of Madeenah and to the Bedouin who had come to seek help there. And he sent some of it to the desert and ordered that it be distributed to all the Arab tribes. Az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm said: " 'Umar said to me in the year of ar-Ramâdah, 'A caravan of camels carrying flour, fat and

⁷³⁴ Op. cit.

⁷³⁵ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar*, p. 262.

⁷³⁶ Ibid, p. 263.

⁷³⁷ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/80.

⁷³⁸ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar*, p. 262.

oil has been sent to help the people of the desert. Go out at the head of this caravan and go to Najd, and bring to me every family you can bring. Whoever you cannot bring, give to each family a camel with whatever goods are on it, and tell them to keep two garments for each person, one for winter and one for summer, and to slaughter the camel and store its fat and dry its meat, then let them take fat and flour and cook them, and eat from that until Allah brings them His provision.'⁷³⁹

'Umar started to send provision to the people month by month, from the food and clothing that he received from the other regions. 'Umar's huge cooking pots were continually tended by skilled workers who cooked from after *Fajr* and then distributed the food among the people. 'Umar announced: "If Allah does not end the famine, then I will allocate to every household a similar number of people and we will feed them so long as we have the means. If we have to, then we will allocate to every family that has food the same number of people who have no food, until Allah sends rain."⁷⁴⁰

According to another report, 'Umar said: "If the famine continues, I will allocate all the hungry people to Muslim households, for the people will not die if their stomachs are half full."⁷⁴¹

'Umar distributed food and provisions to many of the tribes where they were, via committees that he formed. When the camels of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ reached the border of Syria, 'Umar sent someone to supervise their distribution as they entered the Arabian Peninsula. They distributed the aid to various parts of Arabia, slaughtered the

⁷³⁹ Op. cit.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 263.

⁷⁴¹ *As-Siyāsah ash-Shar'iyah* by Dr. Isma'eel Badawi, p. 403; *Maḥd as-Ṣawāb*, 1/364.

camels, handed out the flour and gave out clothing. 'Umar sent men with the food that 'Amr had sent from Egypt by sea, to take it to Tihâmah and feed the people there.⁷⁴²

5.2.4. Seeking the help of Allah and praying for rain (*Ṣalât al-Istisqa'*)

It was narrated that Sulaymân ibn Yasâr said: " 'Umar addressed the people at the time of ar-ramâdah and said, 'O' people, fear Allah concerning yourselves and what you do in secret, for I am being tested by means of you and you are being tested by means of me. I do not know whether this is a sign of divine wrath on me and not you, or on you and not me, but it includes both me and you. Come, let us pray to Allah to guide our hearts aright, to have mercy on us and to relieve us of this drought.' 'Umar was seen that day, raising his hands and calling upon Allah, and the people also called upon Him. He wept and the people wept greatly, then he came down."⁷⁴³

It was narrated that Aslam said: "I heard 'Umar say, 'O' people, I fear that this may be divine wrath that includes us all, so seek the forgiveness of your Lord, give up sin, repent to your Lord and do good.'⁷⁴⁴

It was narrated that 'Abdullâh ibn Sâ'idah said: "I saw 'Umar when he had prayed *Maghrib* he called out, 'O' people, seek the forgiveness of your Lord and repent to Him, ask Him for His bounty and ask Him to send rain of mercy, not rain of punishment.' And he kept on saying that until Allah granted relief from that."⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴² *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 110.

⁷⁴³ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/322; *Ash-Shaykhân min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 323.

⁷⁴⁴ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/322; *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 116.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ash-Shaykhân min Riwayât al-Balâdhuri*, p. 319.

It was narrated from ash-Sha'bi that 'Umar went out to pray for rain. He stood on the *minbar* and recited these verses:

«I said [to them], 'Ask forgiveness from your Lord, verily, He is Oft-Forgiving; He will send rain to you in abundance.»

(*Qur'an* 71: 10-11)

«And ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn unto Him in repentance...»

(*Qur'an* 11: 90)

When 'Umar decided to pray for rain (*al-istisqa'*), he went out with the people, and he wrote to his governors telling them to go out on such and such a day, and to beseech their Lord and ask Him to relieve them of this drought. 'Umar went out on the same day, wearing the cloak of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). When he reached the prayer-place, he addressed the people then he beseeched Allah, and the women also beseeched Him. Most of his *du'ā'* was prayers for forgiveness, and when he had almost finished, he stretched out his hands and turned his cloak around, right to left and left to right. Then he stretched forth his hands and beseeched Allah, and he wept for a long time until his beard became wet.⁷⁴⁶

It is narrated in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhārī* from Anas that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb prayed for rain by virtue of al-'Abbās ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib. He said: «"O' Allah, we used to ask You for rain by virtue of our Prophet (ﷺ), and You would send us rain"⁷⁴⁷. Now we ask You for rain by virtue of the uncle of our Prophet, so send us rain."⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁶ *At-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/320, 321; *Tāreekh al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah* by Ibn Shihb, 2/742.

⁷⁴⁷ i.e., that was because of his *du'ā'* when he was alive. If it were permissible to seek divine help by virtue of the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) after his death, 'Umar would have done that, and he would not have needed his uncle al-'Abbās to make *du'ā'* for him. [Author]

⁷⁴⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 101.

It was narrated that when 'Umar prayed for rain during the year of ar-ramâdah, at the end of his speech he said: "O' Allah, I admit my helplessness and what is with You is more bountiful for them." Then he took al-'Abbâs by the hand and said: "We draw close to You by virtue of the uncle of Your Prophet, for You say and what You say is true:

﴿And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town; and there was under it a treasure belonging to them; and their father was a righteous man...﴾ (Qur'an 18: 82)

You took care of them by virtue of their father's righteousness." Then al-'Abbâs said, with his eyes streaming with tears, "O' Allah, calamity only befalls because of sin, and can only be relieved by repentance. The people are turning to You by virtue of me, because of my relationship to Your Prophet (ﷺ). Our hands are stretched forth to You (admitting) our sins and we turn to You in repentance. Send us rain and do not make us of those who despair, O' Most Merciful of those who show mercy. O' Allah, You are the Guardian and You do not neglect those who are lost, and You do not forsake the weak one in a place of doom. The young are weeping and the old are scared, everyone is complaining to You. You know what is secret and what is yet more hidden. O' Allah, grant them Your aid before they fall into despair and are doomed, for no one despairs of Your mercy but those who are disbelievers."⁷⁴⁹

Then a patch of cloud appeared, and the people said, "Do you see that?" Then it grew bigger and was driven by the wind. Then the wind dropped and it began to rain. By Allah, they did not leave until they had to walk clinging onto the walls and pulling up their waist wrappers. The people started saying to al-'Abbâs: "Congratulations

⁷⁴⁹ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, p. 217.

O' bringer of rain to the two sanctuaries."

Another report describes what al-'Abbās said in his *du'ā* on this occasion: "O' Allah, calamity only befalls because of sin, and can only be relieved by repentance. The people are turning to You by virtue of me, because of my relationship to Your Prophet (ﷺ). Our hands are stretched forth to You (admitting) our sins and we turn to You in repentance, so send us rain." Then rain started to pour down until the land was soaked and the drought ended."⁷⁵⁰

5.2.5. Suspension of *ḥadd* punishments during the year of famine

'Umar suspended *ḥadd* punishments for theft during the year of ar-ramādah. This was not an abolition of the punishment, as some have claimed. Rather it was because the conditions for carrying out the *ḥadd* punishment were not present, so the punishment was suspended for that reason. If a person eats something that belongs to someone else because he is starving and cannot find food and has no other option, he is not intending to steal as such. Hence 'Umar did not cut off the hands of the slaves who took a camel and slaughtered it, but he ordered their master Ḥaṭīb to pay the price of the camel.⁷⁵¹ 'Umar said: "No hand should be cut off for (taking a bunch of dates from) a palm tree⁷⁵² or when there is a famine."⁷⁵³ The *madh-habs* were influenced by 'Umar's fiqh and it says in *al-Mughni* that Aḥmad said: "No hand should be cut off during a famine" means that if a needy person steals something to eat, his hand should not be cut

⁷⁵⁰ *Al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah wa ad-Dawlah al-Umawiyah*, by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 302.

⁷⁵¹ *Al-Khilāfah wa al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon*, by Sālim al-Bahnasāwī, p. 165.

⁷⁵² i.e., because it is still hanging on the tree and has not been stored away in a safe place.

⁷⁵³ *Al-Miṣbāḥ al-Muneer*, p. 292.

off, because he is forced by necessity. Al-Jawzjâni narrated that 'Umar said: "No hand should be cut off during a famine." He (al-Jawzjâni) said, "I asked Aḥmad about that. I asked, 'Do you say the same thing?' He (Aḥmad) said, 'Yes indeed, I would not rule that his hand be cut off if he was forced to do that because of need and the people were suffering hardship and famine.'"⁷⁵⁴

This reflects 'Umar's profound understanding of the aims of shari'ah. 'Umar looked at the heart of the matter and not just at what it appeared outwardly to be. He looked at the reason why a person resorted to stealing and he found out that in both cases the reason was hunger, which is regarded as one of the kinds of necessity which temporarily make forbidden things allowable. This is also indicated by what 'Umar said in the story of the slaves of Ḥaṭīb: "You are using them and making them hungry, so that if one of them eats something that is not his (forbidden for him), it becomes permissible for him."⁷⁵⁵

5.2.6. Delaying the payment of zakah in the year of ar-Ramâdah

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) suspended the payment of zakah during the year of ar-ramâdah, and when the famine ended and the land became productive again, he collected the zakah from the year of ar-ramâdah, i.e., he regarded it as a debt owed by those who were able to pay it, so as to help those who were in need, and so that some wealth might be left in the *bayt al-mâl* after everything in it had been spent.⁷⁵⁶

It was narrated from Yahya ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Ḥaṭīb that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (may Allah be pleased with him) delayed the

⁷⁵⁴ *Al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudâmah, 8/278.

⁷⁵⁵ *A'lâm al-Muwaqqi'een*, 3/11; *al-Ijtihâd fee al-Fiqh al-Islâmi*, p. 136.

⁷⁵⁶ *Al-Khilâfah wa al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, p. 166.

zakah of the year of ar-Ramādah and he did not send his collectors out. The following year, when Allah had lifted the famine, he ordered them to go out and collect two years' zakah. He told them to distribute one year's worth, and to bring the other year's worth to him.⁷⁵⁷

5.3. The plague (*aṭ-Ta'oon*)

In 18 A.H.⁷⁵⁸ a terrifying event occurred, which the sources call the plague of 'Amwās (Emmaus). It is named after a small town called 'Amwās which is between Jerusalem and Ramlah, because that is the first place where the disease appeared. The best description of this disease — according to my limited knowledge — was given by Ibn Ḥajar when he said, after quoting various opinions about the plague: "This is what we have heard of the opinions of scholars of Arabic language, fiqh and medicine concerning the definition of the plague (*aṭ-ta'oon*). The conclusion is that what it means is a swelling which is caused by a disturbance in the blood, or by a rush of blood to a limb which corrupts it. Other kinds of widespread diseases which spread through corrupted air are also called plagues (*ta'oon*) in a metaphoric sense, because they share some similar symptoms or they cause a large number of deaths."⁷⁵⁹ The reason for this distinction between a plague (*ta'oon*) and an epidemic (*waba'*) is in order to understand correctly the hadith in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said that the plague would never enter Madeenah, but epidemics may enter it and indeed did enter it in past centuries.⁷⁶⁰ The plague appeared at that time as the result of the huge battles between the Muslims and the

⁷⁵⁷ *Ash-Shaykhān min Riwayāt al-Balādhuri*, p. 324.

⁷⁵⁸ *Tāreekh al-Qudā'i*, p. 294.

⁷⁵⁹ *Al-Fath*, 10/180.

⁷⁶⁰ *Abu 'Ubaydah 'Āmir ibn al-Jarrāh*, by Muhammad Sharrāb, p. 220.

Byzantines, in which many people were killed and the air became foul because of the large number of corpses. This is something natural which Allah decrees for a reason.⁷⁶¹

5.3.1. 'Umar's return from Sargh on the border between al-Hijâz and Syria

In 17 A.H., 'Umar wanted to visit Syria for the second time, so he set out accompanied by the *Muhâjiroon* and Anşâr, and stopped to camp in Sargh, on the border between the Hijâz and Syria. There he was met by the leaders of the troops who told him that the land was sick and the plague was in Syria. 'Umar consulted with the others and decided to go back. We will discuss this in more detail when we look at the issue of *shoora*.⁷⁶²

After 'Umar left, the land was struck by the widespread plague which was known as the plague of 'Amwâs, which was at its worst in Syria, where many people died, including Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh, who was the governor, and Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, al-Hârith ibn Hishâm (or it was said that he was martyred at al-Yarmook), Suhayl ibn 'Amr, 'Utbah ibn Suhayl and the leaders of the people. The epidemic did not end until after 'Amr ibn al-'Âs (may Allah be pleased with him) became their governor. He addressed the people and said: "O' people, this disease which has befallen you spreads like wildfire, so escape from it in the mountains." So he left and the people left, and they scattered until Allah relieved them of that. 'Umar heard of what 'Amr had done and he did not object to it.⁷⁶³

⁷⁶¹ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 224.

⁷⁶² *Ibid*, Pp. 222, 223.

⁷⁶³ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 225; *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/36.

5.3.2. The death of Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah be pleased with him)

When the plague spread and news of that reached 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), he wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah telling him to come out of that land, saying: "Peace be upon you. There is something I want to discuss with you and I urge you once you read this letter not to put it down until you come to me." Abu 'Ubaydah (رضي الله عنه) realized that 'Umar wanted to bring him away from the plague out of compassion for him and to save his life, and he said: "May Allah forgive the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." Then he wrote to him, saying: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I understand what you said, but I am with some of the Muslim troops and I do not want to save myself and leave them until Allah passes His decree concerning me and them. Please excuse me from coming, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, and let me be with my troops." When 'Umar read the letter he wept, and the people said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, has Abu 'Ubaydah died?" He said, "It is as if he has." Then he wrote to him and said: "Peace be upon you. You have camped with the people in land that is low-lying; take them up into high land where there is fresh air." When his letter arrived, he called Abu Moosa and said: "O' Abu Moosa, this letter has come to me from the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* with what you see. Go out and find a place for the people to camp so I can follow you with them." Abu Moosa went back to his camp and found that his wife had caught the sickness. He went back to (Abu 'Ubaydah) and told him the news. He ordered that a camel be prepared for him and when he put his foot in the stirrup he realized that he had become infected too. He said: "By Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty, I have caught it."⁷⁶⁴

It was narrated that 'Urwah said: "Abu 'Ubaydah and his family were free of the disease of 'Amwās, then he said: 'O' Allah,

⁷⁶⁴ *Tāreekh al-Ṭabari*, 5/35.

send a share upon the family of Abu 'Ubaydah.' Then pustules broke out on his skin and he started looking at them. Someone said, 'It is nothing.' He said, 'I hope that Allah will bless them.'"⁷⁶⁵

Before he was stricken, he stood and addressed the people, saying: "O' people, this disease is a mercy from your Lord and a response to the *du'a*' of your Prophet (ﷺ), and it is the way some of the righteous died."

Abu 'Ubaydah asked Allah to give him his share of it⁷⁶⁶, and when he caught it, he called the Muslims and they came to see him, and he said to them: "I will give you some advice which, if you accept it, you will be fine so long as you live and after you die: establish regular prayer, pay zakah, fast, give in charity, perform Ḥajj and 'Umrah, uphold ties with one another, love one another, be sincere to your rulers and do not deceive them, and do not be distracted by this world. If man lived to be a thousand years old, he would still end up as I am now (i.e., dying). Allah has decreed death for the sons of Adam and they will surely die. The cleverest among them is the one who is most obedient to his Lord and who strives hardest for his Hereafter." Then he said to Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, 'O' Mu'ādh, lead the people in prayer.' So Mu'ādh led them in prayer and Abu 'Ubaydah died (may Allah have mercy on him and forgive him and be pleased with him)."⁷⁶⁷

Mu'ādh stood up and addressed the people: "O' people, repent to Allah sincerely, for if a person meets Allah repenting from his sins, it will be incumbent upon Allah to forgive him his sins. Whoever owes a debt, let him pay it off, for a person is in pledge for his debt. Whoever among you is forsaking a Muslim, let him meet him and

⁷⁶⁵ *Tāreekh adh-Dhahabi*, p. 174.

⁷⁶⁶ *Tāreekh at-Tabari*, 5/36.

⁷⁶⁷ *Al-Iktifa'*, 3/306.

reconcile with him, and shake hands with him, for no Muslim should forsake his fellow Muslim for more than three days. The sin involved in that is serious before Allah. You Muslims are stricken with the loss of a man. By Allah, I do not think that I have seen any of you, O’ slaves of Allah, who is more humble, more honest, more removed from treachery, more sincere towards the public and more compassionate towards them than him. Pray for mercy for him and attend his funeral prayer. May Allah forgive him all his sins. By Allah, no one like him will ever be appointed over you again.” The people gathered, and Abu ‘Ubaydah was brought out, and Mu‘ādh led the funeral prayer for him. When he was brought to his grave, Mu‘ādh, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and ad-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays entered his grave. When they covered him with earth, Mu‘ādh said: “May Allah have mercy on you, O’ Abu ‘Ubaydah. By Allah I will praise him for what I know of him and by Allah I shall not say anything false, fearing lest I incur the wrath of Allah. By Allah, as far as I know, you were one of those who remember Allah a great deal, one of those,

﴿... who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the foolish address them [with bad words] they reply back with mild words of gentleness.﴾
(*Qur’an* 25: 63)

One of,

﴿... those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾
(*Qur’an* 25: 64)

And one of,

﴿... those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but hold a medium [way] between those [extremes].﴾
(*Qur’an* 25: 67)

By Allah, as far as I know, you were one of those who turn to Allah a great deal in humility, one of those who show mercy to the orphans

and the poor, and who hate the harsh and arrogant.”⁷⁶⁸

No one among the people was more upset or more grieved at the loss of Abu 'Ubaydah than Mu'âdh.⁷⁶⁹ Mu'âdh wrote to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) and told him of the death of Abu 'Ubaydah. It said in the letter: “Seek reward for the loss of a man who was sincere towards Allah and had a great fear of Allah in his heart. He was dear to us and to you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*: Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh, may Allah forgive him all his sins. Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return. We seek reward for his loss with Allah, and we put our trust in Allah. I have written to you when death is widespread and there is this epidemic among the people. No one will ever miss his appointment with death. Whoever has not yet died will surely die one day. May Allah make what is with Him better for him than this world. Whether we live or we die, may Allah reward you on behalf of the Muslims, on behalf of our elite and our common folk, and bestow His mercy, His forgiveness, His pleasure and His Paradise. Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.”⁷⁷⁰

When the letter reached 'Umar, he read it and wept greatly, and announced the death of Abu 'Ubaydah to those who were sitting with him.⁷⁷¹ The people wept and grieved greatly, whilst accepting the will and decree of Allah.

5.3.3. The death of Mu'âdh ibn Jabal

After the death of Abu 'Ubaydah, Mu'âdh led the people in prayer for several days and the plague grew worse and many people

⁷⁶⁸ Op. cit., 3/307.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid, 3/309.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid, 3/310.

died. He stood up and addressed the people, saying: "O' people, this disease is a mercy from your Lord and a response to the *du'ā* of your Prophet (ﷺ), and it is the way some of the righteous before you died. Mu'ādh is asking Allah to give the family of Mu'ādh their share of it." Then his son 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Mu'ādh⁷⁷² was stricken with it and when he saw that his son said:

«[This is] the truth from your Lord. So be you not one of those who doubt.»
(*Qur'an* 2: 147)

He said, "O' my son,

«*Insha' Allāh* [if Allah wills], you shall find me of *aṣ-Ṣābiroon* [the patient].»
(*Qur'an* 37: 102)."

Shortly thereafter he died (may Allah have mercy on him) and Mu'ādh offered the funeral prayer for him and buried him. When Mu'ādh returned to his house, he was stricken, and the pain was very intense. His companions started visiting him and when they came to him, he turned to them and said to them: "Strive hard whilst you have a respite and have the opportunity, and you still have some life left, before you wish that you could do some righteous deeds but will not be able to. Spend of what you have before you die and leave it behind as an inheritance for those who come after you. Know that you have nothing of your wealth except that which you eat, drink, wear and spend; whatever else there is, is for your heirs." When the pain grew intense, he said: "O' Lord, cause me to die the way You wish."⁷⁷³ I bear witness that You know that I love You."⁷⁷⁴

When death was at hand, he said: "Welcome to a visitor who has come when he is most needed (i.e., death). The one who regrets

⁷⁷² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/36.

⁷⁷³ *Al-Iktifa'*, 3/308.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

does not succeed. O' Allah, You know that I never wanted to stay in this world to build waterways or plant trees, but I wanted to stay in order to spend long nights in prayer and long hours during the day fasting and feeling thirsty in the intense heat, and to be with the scholars in circles of *dhikr*.”⁷⁷⁵

When he died he was 38 years old.⁷⁷⁶ He appointed 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ to take over his position after he died. 'Amr offered the funeral prayer for him, and entered his grave and placed him in the *lahd*. Some other Muslim men also entered the grave with him. When 'Amr came out of the grave, he said: “May Allah have mercy on you, O' Mu'ādh. As far as we know, you were among the most sincere of the Muslims and one of the best of them. You taught the ignorant, were harsh with evildoers and compassionate towards the believers.”⁷⁷⁷

After the death of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, the leadership of the army went to 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ. He stood up and addressed the people, saying: “O' people, this disease when it befalls spreads like wildfire, so escape from it in the mountains.” So he left and the people left, and they scattered until Allah relieved them of that.⁷⁷⁸

'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said to him: “Peace be upon you. I praise Allah besides Whom there is no other god. Mu'ādh ibn Jabal (may Allah have mercy on him) has died, and death is widespread among the Muslims. They have asked me for permission to move to the open countryside. I know that staying where we are will not bring death any closer and that running

⁷⁷⁵ *Hilyat al-Awliya'*, 1/228-244.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁷ *Al-Iktifa'*, 3/309.

⁷⁷⁸ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/95.

away will not make death any further away or ward off the decree of Allah. Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.”⁷⁷⁹

When the letter of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ reached ‘Umar with news of the death of Mu‘ādh, who died straight after Abu ‘Ubaydah, he was very distressed. ‘Umar and the Muslims wept and grieved for him a great deal. ‘Umar (ﷺ) said: “May Allah have mercy on Mu‘ādh, for by his death this ummah has lost a great deal of knowledge. How many times did he offer sincere advice and we accepted it from him, and we saw how it brought goodness and blessings. How many times did we learn something from him and benefit from it, and he guided us to something good. May Allah reward him with the reward of the righteous.”⁷⁸⁰

The third famous leader who was stricken with the plague was the best of the sons of Abu Sufiyān, who was known as Yazeed al-Khayr. His name was Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyān. Another of the great leaders who were martyred during the plague of ‘Amwās was Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah.⁷⁸¹

5.3.4. ‘Umar’s journey to Syria to set its affairs in order

‘Umar was deeply affected with grief at the death of his great leaders and courageous troops because of the plague in Syria. He received letters from the governors in Syria asking him about the inheritances that had been left behind by the dead, and about numerous other matters. He gathered the people together and

⁷⁷⁹ *Majmoo‘at al-Wathā’iq as-Siyāsiyah*, p. 490.

⁷⁸⁰ *Al-Iktifa’*, 3/310.

⁷⁸¹ *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 1/171, 172; *Tāreekh adh-Dhahabi*, p. 181.

consulted them about the new matters that had arisen, and he resolved to go to the Muslims in their own lands and organize their affairs. After discussing the matter with his *majlis ash-shoora*, he decided to start with Syria. He said: "The inheritances of the people of Syria have been neglected, so I will start with Syria; I will divide the inheritances and I will sort out their affairs as I see fit. Then I will come back and make a tour of other countries and give them my orders." So he departed from Madeenah, where he left 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib in-charge in his absence.⁷⁸² When he came to Syria, he shared out the provisions and formed battalions to go on campaigns in the winter and in the summer, and he organized the defence of the borders. He also appointed governors. He appointed 'Abdullâh ibn Qays over the coastal area and Mu'âwiyah over Damascus. He organized the affairs of the army, leaders and people, and divided the estates of the dead among the living.⁷⁸³

When the time for prayer came, the people said to him: "Why don't you tell Bilâl to give the *adhân*?" So he told him and he gave the *adhân*. There was no one who had met the Prophet (ﷺ) but he wept when Bilâl gave the *adhân* until his beard became wet, and 'Umar wept more than any of them. And those who had not met the Prophet (ﷺ) wept because of their weeping and their remembering the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).⁷⁸⁴

Before he went back to Madeenah, he addressed the people and said: "I have been appointed over you and *insha' Allâh* I have done my best with regard to what Allah has appointed me to do concerning your affairs. We have divided your provision amongst

⁷⁸² *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, by Muhammad Riḍa, p. 230.

⁷⁸³ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by an-Najjâr, p. 325; *al-Fârooq* by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, p. 230.

⁷⁸⁴ *Khulâsat Târeekh Ibn Katheer*; *al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 236.

you, allocated houses and sorted out the armies. We have done all that we wanted to. We have recruited an army to defend you and we have sealed your borders. We have given you your share of the booty, and have given you stipends and provisions. Whoever thinks that there is anything else to be done, let him tell us and we will do it, *insha' Allāh*. And there is no strength except with Allah.”⁷⁸⁵ And this *khutbah* was given before the prayer mentioned above.

The plague of ‘Amwās was a serious threat to the Muslims. It killed more than twenty thousand of them, which was almost half of their number in Syria. The Muslims sensed the danger that this formed with regard to the Byzantines, for had the Byzantines realized the drop in numbers in the Muslim army in Syria, they would have attacked, because it would have been too difficult for the army to defend it. But perhaps the despair that the Byzantines themselves felt prevented them from attacking the Muslims, especially since the local people accepted Muslim rule and were content with their just rule and good conduct. Without their help the Byzantines could not attack Syria, especially since the people were tired of war and wanted a rest from their long fight against a people (the Arabs) who had victory on their side and fear of whom was firmly entrenched in the heart of every man.⁷⁸⁶

5.3.5. Ruling on entering and leaving a land that has been struck by the plague

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «If you hear that this disease is in a certain land, do not go there. If it strikes a land when you are there, do not leave it and try to flee from it.»⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸⁵ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/79.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ashḥar al-Mashāheer*, 2/361.

⁷⁸⁷ Muslim, *Kitāb as-Salām*, hadith no. 2219.

The scholars differed concerning the meaning of this prohibition on leaving and entering such lands. Some of them took it at face value, and some interpreted it in different ways. Those who interpreted it in different ways said that it was permissible for one whose land had been struck by the plague to leave. We have pointed out above how keen 'Umar was to bring Abu 'Ubaydah out of the land that had been struck by the plague, but Abu 'Ubaydah apologized and stayed there. Then 'Umar asked Abu 'Ubaydah to take the Muslims from the low-lying land where there was a lot of water and swamps, and go to high land where there was fresh air, which Abu 'Ubaydah did. 'Umar's letter to Abu 'Ubaydah came after the two had met in Sargh and had heard the hadith of 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf about it not being permitted to leave or enter a land where there was an epidemic.

'Umar went back to Madeenah, and it seems that the epidemic was just beginning and had not yet begun to spread like wildfire. When 'Umar came back to Madeenah news reached him of the large number of deaths in this plague. 'Umar's view that it was permissible to leave a land that had been struck with the plague was also narrated from other *Ṣaḥâbah* who lived through the same sickness at the time of Abu 'Ubaydah in Syria, such as 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them both).

The dispute had to do with leaving a land that had been struck with the plague, not about entering such a land. Some of them said that it is permissible to leave so long as one is not trying to flee from the decree of Allah or believes that fleeing is what will save one from death. As for the one who leaves for a specific reason, this is permissible. If a person leaves to seek medical treatment, that is permissible. If he leaves the plagued land to go to a land that is better, that is recommended and is required of him.

As for Abu ʿUbaydah's staying where he was and offering excuses to ʿUmar for not leaving, this was for health, social, political and leadership reasons that give an example of the highest forms of sincere leadership. Abu ʿUbaydah explained his reasons for staying: "I am with some of the Muslim troops and I do not want to save myself and leave them." The scholars explained the reason for the prohibition on fleeing from the plague by noting that if everyone left, those who were unable to flee — because they were sick with this disease or something else — would be in a bad situation, with no one to take care of them in life or in death. If it were permissible to leave, the strong would leave and this would cause great distress to the weak. They said that the reason for the stern warning against fleeing from the battlefield was the great distress that it would cause to those who did not flee, and it would make them feel scared because others had let them down.

Conclusion

Staying is a concession, and leaving is a concession. If a person is in a land where there is an epidemic and he has been infected, there is no point in his leaving, because by leaving he will transmit the disease to healthy people. Whoever has not been infected is allowed to leave in order to seek medical help, so long as not all the people leave, because some of them must stay behind to tend the sick.⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁸ Abu ʿUbaydah *ʿĀmir ibn al-Jarrāh*, by Sharrāb, Pp. 232-237.

CHAPTER FOUR

Financial and Judiciary Institutions and Their Development at the Time of 'Umar (ؓ)

1. Financial Institutions

1.1. Sources of state income at the time of 'Umar

The Muslims at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs regarded wealth in all forms and of all types as belonging to Allah, and they believed that man was entrusted with it and was to dispose of it in accordance with the conditions stipulated by Allah. The Qur'an confirms this with regard to everything that has to do with wealth and spending it. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Believe in Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad], and spend of that whereof He has made you trustees...﴾ (Qur'an 57: 7)

﴿O' you who believe! Spend of that with which We have provided for you...﴾ (Qur'an 2: 254)

And Allah, the Exalted, Almighty says concerning righteousness (*al-birr*), which incorporates all kinds of goodness:

﴿... And gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to *al-Masâkeen* [the poor], and to the wayfarer, and to

those who ask, and to set slaves free...» (Qur'an 2: 177)

Giving wealth in charity is an acknowledgement from the Muslim, first and foremost, that the wealth which he has in his hands is provision that Allah has granted to him:

«And in the heaven is your provision, and that which you are promised.» (Qur'an 51: 22)

— because Allah, the Almighty has created it. From the basis of this acknowledgement comes the idea of being kind to the slaves of Allah.¹

It was on the basis of this faith-based thinking that 'Umar looked at the wealth of the state which increased greatly during his reign, as many lands were conquered and many people submitted to the rule of the Islamic state. He organized the relations between the state and these peoples. Some of them had come under the rule of the state willingly, after making a peaceful deal, and others had come under its rule by force, when the land that was conquered by force ended up under the control of the state. In some cases he made a deal with the owners of the land, where the owners had left it and retreated, or when it had belonged to the former rulers and their men. Some of the peoples of these lands were people of the Book (such as Jews and Christians), and 'Umar worked out a way to deal with them in accordance with the wise laws of Allah.

'Umar started to organize the financial affairs of his state, whether it had to do with income, expenditure, or organizing the people's dues under different departments. The state income began to increase during 'Umar's reign so he started to develop it and appointed workers to supervise it. The most important sources of income at this time were zakah, war booty, *al-fay'*, *jizyah*, *kharâj* and

¹ *Dirâsât fee al-Ḥaḍârah al-Islâmiyah* by Aḥmad Ibraheem ash-Shareef, p. 253.

the tithes ('*ushoor*) paid by merchants. 'Umar strove to develop these sources and he issued rulings on the basis of the aims of shari'ah which were laid down for the people's benefit. New circumstances arose that had been unknown at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)², but 'Umar implemented the Qur'an and Sunnah in a brilliant fashion; he did not decide on any matter without consulting the Muslims, and he did not force his own opinion in any matter. If a matter arose, he would order the Muslims to gather so that he could consult them, and he would follow their views.³

The most important sources of income at the time of 'Umar were:

1.1.1. Zakah

This is the social component of the pillars of Islam, and the first divine decree of Islam. It is enjoined upon the wealth of the rich Muslims, to be taken from them and given to the poor, based on set thresholds on crops, fruits, gold and silver, trade goods and livestock, in order to establish a kind of social security and to create love between the rich and poor. Zakah is a duty that has to do with wealth, and as the saying goes, money makes the world go around (i.e., it is an essential part of life). Some people are blessed because of wealth and some are doomed because of it. This is the way of Allah with regard to His creation, and you will not find any change in the way of Allah (cf. Qur'an 33: 62).

As wealth has a great impact on people's lives, Islam paid a great deal of attention to the issue of wealth, and established zakah as a precise, wise and compassionate system which brings hearts together.⁴ Hence 'Umar followed in the footsteps of the Messenger of

² Op. cit., p. 254

³ *Mabâdî' an-Nidhâm al-Iqtisâdî al-Islâmi* by Dr. Su'âd Ibrâheem Sâlih, p. 213.

⁴ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by 'Abdullâh=

Allah (ﷻ) and Abu Bakr, and organized and developed the institution of zakah. He sent collectors to gather the zakah from all regions of the Islamic state, after many of the inhabitants of the conquered lands became Muslim. Justice in collecting wealth was the hallmark of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate, without that causing any detriment to the *bayt al-mâl* or treasury. 'Umar criticized one of his zakah-collectors who took a sheep with huge udders, and said: "Its owners did not give it willingly. Do not cause distress to the people."⁵

Some people from Syria came to 'Umar and said: "We have wealth, horses and slaves, and we want to give zakah from them to purify our wealth." 'Umar said: "What my two companions did before me, I will also do." He consulted the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), among whom was 'Ali. 'Ali said: "It is good, so long as it is not something to be taken regularly from them after you."⁶

Dr. Akram Diya' al-'Umari stated that the *Ṣaḥâbah* suggested to 'Umar that he impose zakah on slaves and horses after ownership of slaves and horses became widespread among the Muslims. 'Umar regarded slaves and horses as trade goods and he imposed one *dinâr* (ten *dirhams*) on slaves, young and old. He imposed ten *dirhams* on Arabian horses and five *dirhams* on non-Arabian horses. It may be understood that he did not impose zakah on slaves who were used as servants or horses that were used for jihad, because these were not trade goods, rather he compensated those who had paid zakah on them by giving them approximately 209 kg of wheat every two months, which was worth more than the zakah. This was because of

=Jam'ân as-Sa'di, p. 8.

⁵ *Al-Muwatta'*, 1/256; *Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 194.

⁶ *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethah Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no. 82. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ): «“The Muslim does not have to pay zakah on his horse or his slave.”»⁷

'Umar took one fifth from buried treasure when it was found. He was also keen to circulate wealth and ensure that it was used or invested, lest zakah consume it as time went by.⁸

He had wealth for an orphan which he gave to al-Ḥakam ibn al-ʿĀṣ ath-Thaqafi to engage in trade⁹, because 'Umar did not have time to engage in trade as he was so busy with the affairs of state. When the profit rose from ten thousand *dirhams* to one hundred thousand, 'Umar got suspicious. When he found out that the merchant has used the orphan's connection to 'Umar he rejected the entire profit and restored the capital, because he regarded the profit as ill-gotten gains.¹⁰ He was acting on the same principle that he imposed on his governors, which was the rejection of any abuse of positions of responsibility when working for the state. Hence if the governors made a great deal of wealth in business, he would take a share of that wealth (and put it in the *bayt al-māl*).¹¹ We will discuss this further when we discuss the governors.

With regard to the zakah on crops, 'Umar took one-tenth of those that were irrigated by the rain and rivers, and half of one-tenth of those that were irrigated artificially.¹² This is in accordance with

⁷ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tirmidhi*, 1/196. Tirmidhi said: This is to be followed according to the scholars.

⁸ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 194, 195.

⁹ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 195; *al-Amwāl* by Ibn Zanjawayh, 3/990. The report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁰ *Al-Amwāl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 455; the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. Quoting from *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 195.

¹¹ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 195.

¹² *Al-Musannaf*, 4/134, 135; the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. Quoting from *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 195.

the Sunnah. He would urge kindness to the owners of gardens and orchards when estimating the yield of dates.¹³ He took zakah of one-tenth on honey if the state protected the bees' area for the investor.¹⁴

Supplies of wheat increased during his caliphate, so he allowed the people to give *zakât al-fiṭr* in the form of wheat, giving half of the weight of barley, dates or raisins that they used to give before.¹⁵ This was done to make things easier for the people, and to accept better quality wealth, even if it was of a different type.¹⁶

As for the amount of wealth that was collected in zakah each year, that is not known, and the reports that mention some figures give only partial and imprecise details; it is not possible to get the full picture. It was said that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb protected the land of ar-Rabdhah for the zakah herds (camels and horses given as zakah), and he used to use them in jihad for the sake of Allah. The number of mounts used each year in jihad for the sake of Allah was forty thousand.¹⁷

With regard to the people who were employed to supervise this institution, the sources mention the names of a number of them during the caliphate of 'Umar. They were: Anas ibn Mâlik, Sa'eed ibn Abi adh-Dhubâb, Ḥârith ibn Maḍrab al-'Abdi, 'Abdullâh ibn al-Sâ'idi, Sahl ibn Abi Ḥaṭhamah, Maslamah ibn Makhlad al-Anṣâri, Mu'âdh ibn Jabal in-charge of Bani Kilâb, Sa'd al-A'raj in-charge of Yemen, and Sufiyyân ibn 'Abdullâh ath-Thaqafi, who was the governor of *aṭ-Ṭâ'if* and used to collect its zakah.¹⁸

¹³ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 195, the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 195, the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 196, the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁶ *Faṭḥ al-Bâri*, 3/313; quoting from *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 196.

¹⁷ *Al-Ḥayât al-Iqtiṣâdiyyah fee al-'Uṣoor al-Islâmiyah al-Oola*, by Dr. Muhammad Baṭânah, p. 104.

¹⁸ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, Pp. 196, 197.

1.1.2. *Jizyah*

Jizyah is a tax which is imposed on the individuals from among the People of the Book who come under the protection of the Muslims.¹⁹ It has also been suggested that it is a poll tax levied on the *kuffār* as a form of humiliation or to make them feel subdued²⁰, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Fight against those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad], and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth [i.e. Islam] among the people of the Scripture [Jews and Christians], until they pay the *Jizyah* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.» (Qur'an 9: 29)

The *jizyah* was levied on the people of the Book, namely the Jews and Christians; there is scholarly consensus on the fact that they are people of the Book and there is no dispute on this point. The *jizyah* was also levied on a people who may have had a Book originally, namely the Magians (Zoroastrians). 'Umar was confused about them at first, and was uncertain whether to take the *jizyah* from them or not, until 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf resolved the matter by narrating that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had taken the *jizyah* from the Magians of Ḥajar.²¹

Ibn Abi Shaybah and others narrated that 'Umar was between the Prophet's grave and the *minbar*, and he said: "I do not know what to do with the Magians, for they are not people of the Book." 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say:

¹⁹ *As-Siyāsah ash-Shar'īyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, Pp. 113, 114; *al-Mu'āhadāt fee ash-Sharee'ah* by Dr. ad-Deek, p. 313.

²⁰ *Ahl adh-Dhimma fee al-Ḥadārah al-Islāmiyah*, by Ḥasan al-Mimmi, p. 39.

²¹ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 235.

«“Treat them as you treat the people of the Book.”»²² According to another hadith, 'Umar did not want to take the *jizyah* from the Magians until 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf testified that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had taken it from the Magians of Hajar.²³ The scholars explained that the reason why it was taken from the Magians was that they were originally people of a Book, and they only started to worship fire after that. So 'Umar took the *jizyah* from the people of as-Sawâd (the regions between the two rivers in Iraq) and he took it from the Magians in Persia. He wrote to Juz' ibn Mu'âwiyah saying: “Look at the Magians around you and take the *jizyah* from them, for 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf told me that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) took it from the Magians of Hajar.”²⁴

Jizyah is obligatory upon free men of sound mind, but it is not obligatory upon women, children, the insane or slaves, because they are followers and dependents. Also, the *jizyah* is not to be taken from the poor to whom charity is given, or from the paralyzed. If a paralyzed or chronically-sick person can afford it, it may be taken from him. The same also applies to the blind and monks in the monasteries, if they can afford it, it may be taken from them, but if they are poor and receive charity from others who are better off, then the *jizyah* is not taken from them.²⁵

The *jizyah* is no longer payable if a person dies, because it is a levy that is paid per person, and if the person is no longer there because he has died, it is no longer due. If a person who is obliged to pay *jizyah* becomes a Muslim, then he no longer has to pay the *jizyah* because of his becoming Muslim. Two men from Ulliyas became

²² Op. cit., p. 235, quoting from *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, 1/141.

²³ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Jizyah wa al-Muwâda'ah*, hadith no. 3156 (p. 338 note 2).

²⁴ Bukhari, hadith no. 3156.

²⁵ *Ahl adh-Dhimma fee al-Hadârah al-Islâmiyah*, p. 42.

Muslim, and the *jizyah* was waived for them.²⁶ Ar-Raqeel, the chieftain of an-Nahrayn, became Muslim and 'Umar allocated a stipend of two thousand for him, and waived the *jizyah*.²⁷

It is worth noting that the *jizyah* was waived for the whole year in which a *dhimmi* became a Muslim, whether he became Muslim at the beginning of the year, in the middle or at the end. 'Umar said: "If a collector takes the *jizyah* in his hand, then the person who paid it becomes Muslim, it should be returned to him."²⁸

It is also waived if a person becomes poor. If a *dhimmi* become poor after having been rich, and he becomes unable to pay the *jizyah*, it is waived in his case. 'Umar waived the *jizyah* for an old blind man whom he saw begging from people²⁹, and he allocated to him some money from the *bayt al-māl* to help him survive.

The *jizyah* is also waived if the state becomes unable to protect the *dhimmis*, because the *jizyah* is a tax that is levied on people living in the Islamic state which is paid in return for their benefiting from the public services and protection of the state, and because they do not bear the responsibility of defending the state.³⁰

Among the evidence that the *jizyah* is paid in return for protection is what Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ did when the Byzantines massed on the northern border of the Muslim lands. Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to the governors whom he had appointed in each city with whose people he had a treaty, telling them to give back to the people the *jizyah* and *khārāj* that they had collected from them. He

²⁶ Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar, p. 238.

²⁷ Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, p. 238, quoting from *al-Muḥalla*, 7/345.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 239, quoting from *al-Mughni*, 8/511.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 239.

³⁰ *Al-Mu'āhadāt fee ash-Sharee'ah al-Islāmiyah*, by Dr. ad-Deek, p. 314.

wrote to them telling them to say to them: "We are returning your wealth to you because we have heard that the armies are massing. You stipulated to us that we should protect you, but we are not able to do that, so we are returning to you what we took from you, for we are bound by our conditions. Whatever deal we wrote between us will remain in force when Allah grants us victory." When they told them that and returned to them the money that they had collected from them, they said: "May Allah bring you back to us and grant you victory over them (i.e., the Byzantines), for if it had been them, they would not have returned anything to us. They would have taken everything we had left and would not have left anything for us."³¹

The *jizyah* was also waived if the *dhimmis* themselves took on the burden of defence at the request of the state, as happened in the treaty which Surâqah ibn 'Amr drew up with the people of Ṭabaristân, after 'Umar agreed to that.³²

With regard to the value of the *jizyah*, it is not fixed, and it varies from one region to another, according to the people's ability to pay and the circumstances in each region. The rate for the people of as-Sawâd (in Iraq) varied between forty-eight and twenty-four *dirhams*, depending on what each person could afford. That was taken from them each year, and if they brought something other than money that was accepted from them; the equivalent value in livestock, goods, etc. would be accepted from them.³³

For the people of Syria the rate was four *dinârs*, plus supplying the Muslims with two *mudds* of wheat and three measures of olive oil for each individual. For those who paid in silver, the rate was forty

³¹ *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 143; *al-Mawârid al-Mâliyah*, by Dr. Yoosuf 'Abdul-Maqsood, p. 228.

³² *Târeekh ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah* by Dr. Jameel al-Maṣri, p. 327.

³³ *Dawr al-Hijâz fee al-Hayât as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 230.

dirhams and fifteen *ṣā's* for each individual.

In Egypt the rate was two *dinārs* for each person who had reached the age of puberty, unless he was poor.³⁴

The people of Yemen had submitted to Islam during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), and the *jizyah* had been imposed on every man at the rate of one *dinār* or its equivalent in garments. Some weak reports indicate that this *jizyah* remained in effect during 'Umar's caliphate and was not changed despite their weakness. This is in accordance with 'Umar's policy of paying attention to the people's situation and not changing what the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) had decided.³⁵

The *jizyah* varied according to what the people could afford and according to the region's wealth. It was to be decided within the framework of people's ability to pay, without burdening them or causing any harm to them.³⁶

'Umar commanded his collectors to be kind to the people when collecting it. When a great deal of wealth was brought to 'Umar he said: "I think that you have destroyed the people." They said, "No, by Allah. We have not taken anything that was not given with full permission and willingly." He said: "With no force or coercion?" They said, "That is so." He said: "Praise be to Allah Who has not caused any force or coercion to happen at my hands or by my authority."³⁷

Among the most well known people who were employed in this institution were 'Uthmān ibn Haneef and Sa'eed ibn Hudhaym,

³⁴ *Dawr al-Ḥijāz fee al-Ḥayāt as-Siyāsiyah*, p. 230.

³⁵ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 173.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 231; *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 167.

³⁷ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 243.

and the governors of regions such as 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, Muʿāwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyān and others.

The *jizyah* was regulated by a number of rulings and laws which the *fuqaha* derived from the texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah and the actions of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. These rulings indicate that the institution of *jizyah* was one of the sources of income for the Islamic state. It also played a political role. The fact that *ahl adh-dhimmah* were making a payment to the state was indicative of their sincerity towards it and their submission to its rulings and laws, and their adherence to the terms of their treaty.³⁸ Professor Hasan al-Mimmi is of the view that the institution of *jizyah* was more political than financial in nature.³⁹ In fact this institution combined both elements, and was one of the sources of income for the Islamic state.

'Umar took double the zakah from the Christians of Taghlib

Some of the Arabs of the Peninsula were Christians, and refused to pay the *jizyah* because they thought it was insulting and a source of shame. Al-Waleed sent the Christian chiefs and scholars to 'Umar and he said to them: "Pay the *jizyah*." They said to 'Umar, "Grant us safety and security, for by Allah, if you impose the *jizyah* we will go to the land of the Byzantines. By Allah, you are going to shame us among the Arabs." He said to them, "You have shamed yourselves and gone against your nation like other Arab tribes who went against their nation and shamed themselves. By Allah, you will pay it with humiliation. If you flee to the Byzantines, I will write to my governor and tell him to take you captive." They said, "Take something from us, but do not call it *jizyah*." He said, "We will call it *jizyah*; you can call it whatever you want." 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib (عليه السلام) said to him, "O' Ameer al-Mu'mineen, didn't Sa'd ibn Mālik double

³⁸ *Ahl adh-Dhimmah fee al-Ḥadārah al-Islāmiyah*, p. 43.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

the zakah for them?" He said, "Yes." So he listened to him and accepted that (double zakah) from them instead of the *jizyah*.⁴⁰

From this report we can learn a lesson about how to deal with arrogant enemies who address the Muslims with pride and arrogance, and threaten to go and join the *kāfir* state. We see how 'Umar dealt with them harshly and disdainfully; he threatened that if they went to join the *kuffār*, he would strive to bring them back and treat them like enemy combatants, taking their women and children captive, which would be worse for them than paying the *jizyah*. This forceful response dispelled the pride and arrogance from their minds, and they became humble and asked the caliph to agree to take whatever he wanted without calling it *jizyah*. At this point 'Ali intervened, and his opinion carried weight with 'Umar because of his understanding of Islam. He suggested that he double the zakah for them as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ had done with others like them, and 'Umar accepted that in order to soften their hearts and to stop them attempting to go and join the *kāfirs*. This opinion was accepted as it was suggested at the right time, which was after 'Umar had removed the pride and arrogance that was in their hearts. But if he had accepted that at the beginning, they would have remained arrogant and there would have been no guarantee that they would not break the treaty later on and mistreat the Muslims.⁴¹

In the story of Banu Taghlib we also learn that they were called to Islam and they refused, then they were called to pay the *jizyah* and they did not agree to that and they ran away, aiming to join the Byzantines. An-Nu'mān ibn Zar'ah said to 'Umar: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, Banu Taghlib are an Arab people; they are too proud to

⁴⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/30; Dr. al-'Umari classed this report as *ḍa'eef*. See *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 167.

⁴¹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 11/141-142.

pay the *jizyah*, and they do not have any wealth, they are just farmers and herders, but they are tough fighters. Do not help your enemy against you by means of them." So 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) worked out an agreement whereby they would pay double zakah⁴², and he said, "This is a *jizyah*; you may call it whatever you like."⁴³ Banu Taghlib said, "So long as it is not a *jizyah* like the *jizyah* of the non-Arabs, then we will accept it and keep our religion."⁴⁴

As for the reason why 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) agreed to accept the zakah from Banu Taghlib, and whether it was regarded as zakah or *jizyah*, it goes back to whether the naming of a thing can be compromised. The caliph agreed to it so long as it served the public interest. What motivated him to do that was the fear that Banu Taghlib might join the Byzantines and the hope that they might become Muslim and help the Muslims against their enemies. These were Arab people who had a sense of pride, which justified maintaining their dignity. The wealth that would come from them was better for the Muslims and the *bayt al-mâl* than their running away and joining the ranks of the Byzantines.⁴⁵

As for whether it was zakah or *jizyah*: it was *jizyah*, because it was to be disposed of like *kharāj*, whereas zakah is not imposed on non-Muslims. Moreover, *jizyah* is given in return for protection, and Banu Taghlib were under the protection of the Muslims. But at the same time, we can say that it was not *jizyah* in a practical sense, because what was imposed on the Christians of Banu Taghlib was imposed on the same things on which zakah is imposed. For everything on which the Muslims are obliged to pay zakah, crops,

⁴² *Al-Amwâl*, 1/37, quoting from *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm* by 'Abdullâh Jam'ân, p. 72.

⁴³ *Fath al-Qadeer*, 1/514; *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 72.

⁴⁴ *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 186; *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 72.

⁴⁵ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 72.

fruits, livestock and gold and silver, they were required to pay double, and it was imposed on women as well as men, and it was not imposed on an individual basis. This is different from *jizyah* in the usual sense.⁴⁶

What matters is that in either case, whether it is regarded as zakah or *jizyah*, it was a tax which demonstrated their submission to Islamic rule.⁴⁷

There were also other taxes and obligations that the Muslims imposed on the conquered lands besides the *jizyah*, which were developed further during the caliphate of 'Umar. These included offering hospitality when envoys and ambassadors or other Muslims came and visited the land. The limit set for hospitality during 'Umar's caliphate was three days, offering what they ordinarily ate, and not going to the trouble of slaughtering a sheep or a chicken or offering anything they could not afford.⁴⁸

When we looked at infrastructure development at the time of 'Umar, we mentioned some of the agreements which included maintaining the roads, building bridges and constructing waterways. The system of *jizyah* was developed further during 'Umar's reign. He took a census, in which a distinction was made between the rich, the poor and those who were of average means. He introduced many conditions and obligations in the texts of the treaties which had not been known before. That was because of the spread of development and the spread of Islamic rule to Egypt, Syria and Iraq, and because the Muslims were mixing with the people of those lands and had ongoing contact with their culture, which enabled them to run the affairs of state and develop the infrastructure in a gradual manner.

⁴⁶ Op. cit., p. 73; *an-Nidhām al-Islāmi al-Muqārīn*, p. 39.

⁴⁷ *Siyāsat al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 73.

⁴⁸ *Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyah wa al-Wilāyāt ad-Deeniyah*, p. 164.

They introduced new conditions to the peace deals that had not existed before, such as maintaining roads and building bridges, which are things that help developed nations. Hence affairs were put in order and the principles of running financial and other affairs were set up.⁴⁹

Conditions of the jizyah contract and when it was to be paid

From the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the *fuqaha'* derived a number of such conditions:

- ❖ They should not refer to the Book of Allah with any criticism or distortion
- ❖ They should not mention the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in terms of rejection or disbelief
- ❖ They should not mention the religion of Islam with any criticism or insult
- ❖ They should not have relations with any Muslim woman by way of *zinâ* or in the name of marriage
- ❖ They should not tempt a Muslim away from his religion or harm him financially or cause him annoyance because of his religion
- ❖ They should not help those who are at war against the Muslims⁵⁰

With regard to the time when it should be paid, the caliph 'Umar stipulated that the *jizyah* should be paid at the end of the year, meaning the end of the agricultural year. This change in the time for paying the *jizyah*, which was introduced during 'Umar's caliphate, came about because of increased stability, which in turn requires organization and selection of a time that was suited both to the state

⁴⁹ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 174.

⁵⁰ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar*, p. 76.

and to those who were obliged to pay the *jizyah*. Collecting it at the time of the harvest, which the historians describe as the end of the year, was a way of warding off hardship as well as making it easier for those who were paying it.⁵¹

1.1.3. *Kharāj*

Kharāj has two meanings. In the general sense it refers to any income that comes to the *bayt al-māl* of the Muslims from sources other than zakah. So it comes under the general heading of *fay'* and includes the income from *jizyah*, '*ushoor* (tithes) etc. And it has a specific meaning, which is the income from the lands that the Muslims had conquered by force, which the ruler had then left to earn an income for the Muslims in perpetuity, as 'Umar did with the land of as-Sawād in Iraq and Syria.⁵² Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbali said: "*Kharāj* is not based on the value of the land or the income from the rent, rather it is not based on the land itself."⁵³

When Islam grew strong through conquests, especially after the defeat of the two "superpowers" of Persia and Byzantium, the sources of income of the Islamic state increased, as did its expenditure. In order to maintain the integrity of this far-flung state and to protect its authority and guarantee its people's interests, both private and public, it was essential to have a wise, sensible financial policy. 'Umar thought that the way to achieve that was to have a fixed and regular income that could be spent on all these aims, and that income was the *kharāj*. The conquerors wanted to divide the booty of wealth and land among themselves according to what is mentioned in the Qur'an about booty:

⁵¹ Op. cit., p. 67.

⁵² *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 24, 25; *Iqtisādiyyāt al-Ḥarb*, p. 215.

⁵³ *Al-Istikhṛāj li Ahkām al-Kharāj*, p. 40; *Iqtisādiyyāt al-Ḥarb*, p. 215.

﴿And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth [1/5th] of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad)], [and also] the orphans, *al-Masâkeen* [the poor] and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our slave [Muhammad] on the Day of Criterion [between right and wrong], the Day when the two forces met [the battle of Badr]; and Allah is Able to do all things.﴾
(*Qur'an* 8: 41)

At first 'Umar wanted to divide the land among the conquerors, but 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (عليه السلام) thought that it should not be divided. Mu'âdh ibn Jabal agreed with him and warned 'Umar against doing that. Abu 'Ubayd narrated that 'Umar came to al-Jâbiyah and wanted to divide the land among the Muslims, but Mu'âdh said: "By Allah, the consequences of that will not be good, for if you divide it, all these lands will come under the people's control but eventually it will end up in the hands of one man or one woman. Then after them there will come people who will engage in a great deal of jihad, but they will not find anything (because all the land will already have been conquered — their jihad will be in self-defence). So think of something that will benefit all the Muslims, now and later on."⁵⁴

Thus Mu'âdh drew 'Umar's attention to an important matter, and 'Umar started to study the verses of the Qur'an and ponder the meaning of each word he read, until he came to the verses in *Soorah al-Hashr* which speak about the division of *fay'*. Then it became clear to him that they were referring to the *fay'* of the Muslims at that time and for those who came after them. So he decided to follow Mu'âdh's view. News of that spread among the people and a dispute arose between him and some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them); 'Umar and his supporters did not think that the

⁵⁴ *Al-Amwâl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 75; *Siyâsah al-Mâl*, p. 103.

conquered lands should be divided, but some of the *Ṣaḥābah* — including Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ and az-Zubayr ibn 'Awwām, thought that it should be divided, as war booty was divided and as the Prophet (ﷺ) had divided Khaybar. But 'Umar refused to divide it and he recited the verse of *al-khums* in *Soorah al-Hashr* to them:

«And what Allah gave as booty [*Fay*] to His Messenger [Muhammad] from them — for this you made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry. But Allah gives power to His Messengers over whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.»

(*Qur'an* 59: 6)

This refers to Banu an-Naḍeer. Then Allah (ﷻ) said:

«What Allah gave as booty [*Fay*] to His Messenger [Muhammad] from the people of the townships — it is for Allah, His Messenger [Muhammad], the kindred [of Messenger Muhammad], the orphans, *al-Masākeen* [the poor], and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger [Muhammad] gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain [from it]. And fear Allah; verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.»

(*Qur'an* 59: 7)

This is general and applies to all the townships. Then Allah said:

«[And there is also a share in this booty] for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him, and helping Allah [i.e. helping His religion — Islamic Monotheism] and His Messenger [Muhammad]. Such are indeed the truthful [to what they say].»

(*Qur'an* 59: 8)

The passage did not stop there, rather Allah mentions others who may also benefit from the booty:

«And [it is also for] those who, before them, had homes [in

Madeenah] and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given [from the booty of Banu an-Naḍeer], and give them [emigrants] preference over themselves even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.﴾ (*Qur'an* 59: 9)

This applies to the Anṣār in particular, but it does not stop there, rather Allah (ﷻ) mentions others and says:

﴿And those who came after them say, 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.'﴾ (*Qur'an* 59: 10)

This is general and applies to those who come after them. There is no one among the Muslims who does not have a right to this *fay'*. 'Umar said: "If I live, a shepherd in Ṣan'â' (Sana of Yemen) will most certainly get his share of this *fay'* without having to ask for it."⁵⁵

According to another report, 'Umar said: "How about those Muslims who come and find that the land with its people has been divided and inherited from father to son and has become exclusively theirs? This is not a good idea." 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf said to him, "What is your opinion? The land and its people are no more than what Allah has given them as *fay'*." 'Umar said, "That is what you say but I do not say that. By Allah, no land will be conquered after me where there is a lot of *fay'*, rather it is likely to be a burden on the Muslims. If the land of Iraq and its people are shared out, and the land of Syria with its people, then who will guard the borders? What will be left for the children and widows of this land and other lands of Syria and Iraq?" They argued a great deal with 'Umar and said, "Will

⁵⁵ *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 67; *Iqtisâdiyât al-Ḥarb*, p. 217.

you give what Allah has bestowed on us by means of our swords to people who were not present, and to their children and their children's children who were not present?" 'Umar did not say any more than, "This is my opinion." They said, "Consult others." So he sent for ten of the Anṣār who were elders and nobles of al-Aws and al-Khazraj and addressed them, saying among other things, "I am like any one of you. Today you say what you think is right, and it does not matter who disagrees with me or agrees with me. I do not want you to follow what suits my whims and desires." Then he said, "You have heard the words of those who say that I have wronged them, but I thought that there would be nothing to be conquered after the land of Chosroes; Allah has given us their wealth, their land and their people and I divided the wealth they seized as booty among those who were entitled to it, and I took the *khums* and spent it as it should be spent. I thought that I would leave the land and the people working on it as they are, and impose the *kharāj* on them for it, and impose on them the *jizyah*, which they would pay and it would be a *fay'* for the Muslims, for the fighters and the children, and for those who come after them. Look at these borders which require men to guard them. Look at these great cities which need a huge army to protect them, which in turn needs money. Where will this money come from if I divide the land and its people?" They all said, "Your view is correct and you have spoken well. If you do not guard these borders and these cities with men, and you do not spend on them to keep them in good shape, the *kāfirs* will come back and take over the cities."⁵⁶

'Umar also said: "If I divide it among them, it will become a fortune used by the rich among you (cf. Qur'an 59: 7), and the Muslims who come after you will not have anything. Allah has given them a right to that, as He (ﷻ) says:

⁵⁶ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 67; *Iqtisādiyyāt al-Ḥarb*, p. 217.

«And those who came after them...» (Qur'an 59: 10)."

Then he said: "This refers to all the people until the Day of Resurrection." After that, 'Umar and the senior *Ṣaḥābah* decided not to divide the land.⁵⁷

From his discussion with the *Ṣaḥābah* we can see 'Umar's style of argument, and how he combined the strength of evidence and presented it well, and sought to soften the heart of his opponents, in what he said to the Anṣār when discussing the land of as-Sawād. If there was a politician who had a great deal of experience in addressing parliament and he wanted to address the delegates in order to win their approval for some project, he could not come up with anything more eloquent than this. On top of that, 'Umar was distinguished by the fact that he meant sincerely what he said, and was not speaking as a crafty politician; his style is unparalleled.⁵⁸

Did 'Umar go against the Prophet (ﷺ) in his ruling on the land of kharāj?

There are some who say that 'Umar went against the Messenger (ﷺ) by not dividing the land of *kharāj*, because the Prophet (ﷺ) divided Khaybar. They say that if the ruler leaves the land that was conquered by force as it is, that is going against the Sunnah. But this is wrong and is an audacious accusation against the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. What the Prophet (ﷺ) did in Khaybar indicates that what he did is permissible; it does not indicate that it is obligatory. Even if we did not have any evidence that it is not obligatory, the actions of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) are sufficient to indicate that it is not obligatory. So how about the fact that Makkah

⁵⁷ *Siyāsat al-Māl fee al-Islām fee 'Ahd 'Umar*, p. 105.

⁵⁸ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 210.

was conquered by force as is narrated in many *ahâdeeth*; in fact the reports narrated by the scholars of *Maghâzi* and *Seerah* reach the level of being *mutawâtir*.

When Quraysh broke the treaty, the Prophet (ﷺ) came and camped in Marr adh-Dhahrân. None of them came to seek a peace treaty with him, and he did not send anyone to seek a peace treaty with them. Rather Abu Sufiyân went out to reconnoitre and was caught by al-'Abbâs, who brought him as a prisoner, or at best we may say that al-'Abbâs gave him security and he was under his protection. Then he became Muslim, so how can it be imagined, once he became one of the Muslims, that he would make a peace treaty on behalf of the *kuffâr* without the permission of the *kuffâr*? What confirms that is the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) stipulated conditions of safety for the *kuffâr* by saying: «“Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufiyân is safe; whoever enters the Mosque is safe; whoever locks his door is safe.”»⁵⁹ Those who did not fight him were safe; if there had been a peace deal, there would have been no need to announce that.

Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) called them *ṭulāqa'* (freed ones), because he freed them from being held prisoner, such as Thamâmah ibn Athâl and others. And he gave permission to kill some of them, men and women. And it is proven in the books of *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that he said in his address to them: «“Fighting in Makkah was not made permissible for anyone before me and it will not be permissible for anyone after me, and it has only been permitted to me for a short while.”»⁶⁰

He entered Makkah wearing a helmet on his head, and he was not wearing *ihrâm*. If there had been a peace deal, none of that would have been permissible for him. If he had made a peace treaty with any

⁵⁹ Muslim, hadith no. 1780.

⁶⁰ Nasâ'i in *al-Kubra fee al-Ḥajj*, 2/38; *al-Fatâwa*, 20/313.

city that was not a sanctuary, it would not have been permissible for him to do any act of war therein, so how about the holy city whose people were at peace with him? Moreover, they fought Khâlid and a group of Muslims killed a group of *kuffâr*.

In conclusion, anyone who studies the reports will inevitably realize that Makkah was conquered by force, but despite that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not divide its land or take its men captive. He conquered Khaybar by force and he did divide it, and he conquered Makkah by force and did not divide it. So it is known that both are permissible.⁶¹

So 'Umar was not going against the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) when he did not divide the conquered lands. He based his decision on a number of principles, including the following:

1. The verse on *fay*' in *Soorah al-Hashr*.
2. The actions of the Prophet (ﷺ) when he conquered Makkah by force then left it to its people and did not impose the *kharâj* on it.
3. The decision of the *majlis ash-shoora* (consultative committee) which 'Umar formed to address this issue after the discussion and debate.

These became the guidelines that were followed with regard to land conquered by the Muslims, who decided to leave the land to its owners. Thus it becomes clear that when 'Umar differentiated between transferable booty and land, he was following the evidence of the texts, reconciling between them and understanding each of them in the proper way. In addition to that, 'Umar intended that the people of the conquered lands should keep their wealth and that the Muslim soldiers should be protected from the *fitnah* of fighting over

⁶¹ *Al-Fatâwa*, 20/312, 313.

land and property and from the *fitnah* of laziness and being distracted by wealth and worldly accumulation.⁶² 'Umar turned to the Holy Qur'an to seek a solution and he examined the various verses and sought a deep understanding of their meanings. He looked at them together and tried to find out the explanation of one by means of another until he reached conclusions that achieved the hoped-for purpose based on the spirit of shari'ah, without being restricted by the apparent meanings of the texts. He was helped through all these stages by his precise understanding of the aims of shari'ah which are included in these texts. This was a complex procedure which could not be undertaken by anyone except one who has experience in *ijtihād* and has been given a proper understanding and the courage to reach the right conclusions. It was thought by some that 'Umar was ignoring the divine text in some cases, but 'Umar could never do that; rather he was a man who excelled in *ijtihād* and had a deep understanding of the aims of shari'ah, to such an extent that when he voiced his opinion, Qur'an would be revealed which was in accordance with it. The conclusion that we draw from this case is that parts of the Qur'an explain other parts, and the same applies to the Sunnah. So when the *mujtahid* is seeking *shar'i* rulings he has to examine all the texts which will help him to find the answer, without restricting himself to only some of them, otherwise he will be regarded as falling short in his *ijtihād*, and whatever conclusion he reaches will be null and void.⁶³

How was the principle of kharāj implemented at the time of 'Umar?

When the senior *Ṣaḥābah* and decision-makers approved of 'Umar's suggestion of leaving the land with its owners and dividing

⁶² *Al-Ijtihād fee al-Fiqh al-Islāmi*, p. 131.

⁶³ *Ibid*, Pp. 131, 132.

the transferable wealth among the conquerors, he appointed two senior persons as delegates, namely 'Uthmân ibn Ḥunayf and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân, to go and measure the land of as-Sawâd in Iraq. When he sent them on this mission, he gave them profound and wise advice. He commanded them to take note of the wealth of individuals, and how fertile or infertile the land was, and the types of plants and trees, and he commanded them to be kind to the people: they were not to be burdened with more than they could bear, rather they were to be left with what they needed for times of hardship and their regular needs. So that his decision would be based on a fair and just foundation, 'Umar wanted to find out the situation of the people of Iraq before the conquest. So he asked these two *Ṣaḥâbis*, 'Uthmân ibn Ḥunayf and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân, to send him a delegation of the leaders of as-Sawâd. They sent them to him and he asked them: "How much did you used to give to the Persians (as taxes) for your land?" They said: "Twenty-seven *dirhams*." 'Umar said, "I would not take that from you."⁶⁴ This indicates that the Islamic conquest was fair and just to the people whose lands were conquered. 'Umar thought that basing the *kharâj* on the size of the land was more fair to the people and would give a better return, without imposing more than they could bear. So 'Uthmân ibn Ḥunayf and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân did the job they were commanded to do in a commendable fashion, and the size of the land of as-Sawâd turned out to be 36,000,000.⁶⁵ For a field of grapevines the rate was ten *dirhams*; for a field of palm trees it was eighty *dirhams*; for a field of reeds it was six *dirhams*; for a field of wheat it was four *dirhams*, and for a field of barley it was two *dirhams*.⁶⁶ They wrote to 'Umar telling him about that and he approved it.

⁶⁴ *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 40, 41.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 38.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 39; *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 108.

'Umar was keen to take care of the people of those lands and was keen to establish justice lest 'Uthmān and Ḥudhayfah had burdened the people and the land with more than they could bear. So he asked them: "How did you work out the taxes on the land? It may be that you have burdened the people with more than they can bear?" Ḥudhayfah said: "I have left something for the people." 'Uthmān said: "I left double what I took, but if you wish I will take it." 'Umar said: "By Allah, if I live I will ensure that the widows of the people of Iraq would need no other ruler after me."⁶⁷

The method that was employed in the Sawād of Iraq was also implemented in the lands of Egypt, except that the one who was in charge there was 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and the unit used to measure the land for the *kharāj* was the acre (*feddān*).⁶⁸ 'Umar did the same with the land of Syria as he had done with the land of as-Sawād, but the historians do not give any clear details of the unit of measurement or the types of crops and fruits on which the *kharāj* was imposed, or who undertook this procedure of measuring the lands of Syria.⁶⁹

The caliph 'Umar made an accurate estimate of the governors' wealth before they were appointed, then when the governors finished their tours of duty, he would confiscate some of the wealth that they had accumulated for themselves during their tours of duty, if it became clear to him that their salaries did not allow them to accumulate all this wealth.⁷⁰ We will discuss that in more detail when we discuss the governors. The property of the state that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) had allocated to the *bayt al-māl* in Iraq, Syria and Egypt became vast, and these properties brought a huge income to the state coffers,

⁶⁷ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 40; *Siyāsāt al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 108.

⁶⁸ *Ad-Dawlah al-ʿAbbāsiyah* by al-Khaḍari, p. 144; *Siyāsāt al-Māl*, p. 109.

⁶⁹ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 111.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 114.

especially in Egypt where the agricultural holdings of the state in ancient times were immense.⁷¹

*What was achieved in security terms
by not dividing the kharāj lands*

There are a number of security interests that were served when the caliph and those who supported him took this decision. I can divide them into two categories, the first of which is internal interests, primarily blocking the way to disputes and fighting among the Muslims, guaranteeing the availability of a regular income for the land and people, and meeting the material needs of future generations of Muslims. The second category is external interests, the most important of which include providing an income to help protect the Muslim borders, meeting the need for men and supplies, the ability to equip armies and pay their salaries, financing equipment and weapons, and allowing some groups to take on the mission of guarding the border and the state's lands by relying on the income from these lands.

It must be noted here that by making this decision, the caliph wanted to lay down a strong foundation for political stability, not only in his own era but also in the following eras. His comments such as, "What about the Muslims who are yet to come?" and "I did not want some of the Muslims to be left out," indicate that he was thinking ahead and planning for comprehensive security. The development of political events during the reign of the second caliph prove that his view was correct.

The fact that the decision-making process with regard to the division of land had so many stages confirms two things: "One is that important decisions that are vital to Muslim interests may take a great

⁷¹ Op. cit., p. 118.

deal of time and effort, and they may require a certain amount of deliberation when exchanging ideas, without that leading to disputes or widening gaps, or leading to ignoring some interest that have to do with the present or future security and safety of the ummah. The other is that some important decisions may only be reached after a difficult debate and discussion and some initial confusion, which may require the ruler to bear the brunt of responsibility in narrowing the gap between opposing views, so that he may lead the Muslims to the *shar'ī* ruling concerning the matter about which they are disputing.⁷²

This exchange of views between the caliph and those of the *Ṣaḥābah* who did not agree with him, with each group basing its views on the revealed texts, proves that the main point of expressing different views in political decisions in general, and those which have to do with the Muslims' interests in particular, is that these views must be based on the revealed texts.

The fact that the caliph consulted the senior *Ṣaḥābah* who had knowledge of the fiqh of rulings and the sources of shari'ah, and their responding by offering him sincere advice, confirms that the people of *shoora* should have distinguishing qualities. Those whose advice is to be sought are the people of understanding and wisdom, who are aware of their role. More precisely, they should be those who do not follow current trends and who habitually train themselves to speak the truth and act upon it, not fearing the blame or criticism of a ruler or anyone else.

It remains to be said that what happened with regard to the decision not to divide the land represents a sublime example of how the *Ṣaḥābah* debated and interacted in accordance with the etiquette and ethics of debate, examining different views, starting with

⁷² *Al-Ab'ād as-Siyāsiyah li Maḥmūd al-Amn fee al-Islām*, by Muṣṭafa Manjūd, Pp. 317, 318.

thinking about the decision not to divide the land. Foremost among them was the caliph 'Umar who did not go beyond this etiquette despite the fact that their opinions differed.⁷³ Rather 'Umar explained that the ruler was simply another member of the *shoora* council. He announced his trust in the *shoora* council of the ummah, whether they agreed or disagreed with him, and he announced that he would refer to the Book of Allah. He (ﷺ) said: "I am like any one of you. Today you will base your decision on the truth, whether you disagree with me or agree with me. You have from Allah a Book that speaks the truth."⁷⁴

The impact of this decision on da'wah

One of the most important effects of this decision was that it put an end to the feudal system. 'Umar abolished the unfair system that had made land-ownership a monopoly and enslaved the peasants to cultivate the land for nothing. 'Umar left the land of as-sawâd in the hands of the peasants, who were to cultivate it in return for paying a just tax (*kharâj*) which they would be able to afford each year. The peasants were pleased with the decision of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه), which gave them possession of the agricultural land which they were to cultivate in return for the *kharâj* which they could afford. This made them feel for the first time in their lives that they, and not the feudal lords of the ruling class, were the owners of the agricultural land. The peasants had been simply workers who cultivated the land and got nothing in return, and all their hard work went to line the pockets of the feudal class of land-owners, who left them nothing but a few crumbs.⁷⁵

⁷³ Op. cit.

⁷⁴ *Ad-Dawr as-Siyâsi* by as-Ṣafwâh, p. 185.

⁷⁵ *Ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ḥosny Ghayṭâs, p. 130.

Pre-emptive actions to stop the Byzantines and Persians calling the people to arms after they had been expelled

‘Umar’s policy of giving the land to the peasants of the regions that had been conquered by force made them feel content, as stated above. This made them hate their former rulers, the Persians and Byzantines, so they did not offer them any help. On the contrary, they offered help to the Muslims against them. The Persian commander, Rustam, called the people of al-Heerah and said: “O’ enemies of God, you rejoice at the Arabs’ invasion of our land, and you help them against us, and you support them with money!”⁷⁶

The people of the conquered lands hastened to enter Islam

Another result of giving the land to the peasants was that they hastened to enter Islam, which spread among them at an astonishing and unprecedented rate. They recognized justice and the truth became apparent to them, and they recognized their human dignity because of the manner in which the Muslims treated them.⁷⁷

Managing the wealth to protect the borders

The Islamic state stretched in all directions and its borders expanded at an early stage. One of the most important of these borders was that which was known as the Euphrates border, which extended along a strategic line separating the Islamic state from the Byzantine Empire and other borders. In every region ‘Umar kept as many horses as were needed, and the number of horsemen stationed on the borders was more than thirty thousand. This is in addition to the numbers of foot soldiers and other forces such as those who rode camels etc. ‘Umar kept them as an army which was organized to protect the Muslim borders, and he guaranteed their provision so as

⁷⁶ *Ad-Da‘wah al-Islâmiyah fee ‘Ahd ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 131.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 132.

to keep them from being distracted by anything from jihad for the sake of spreading the call of Islam. The *kharāj* was one of the means by which Allah made it possible to equip these forces and guarantee provisions for their soldiers.⁷⁸

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) laid down guidelines for the organization of the *kharāj* as an important source of income for the state coffers. The aim behind it was so that the *bayt al-māl* would be able to do what it needed to of achieving the interests of the ummah, guarding the borders and securing the roads. That could only be achieved by keeping the people on the land which the Muslims had acquired by force, in return for a specific percentage of the yield of the land. This made them work harder and invest more time and effort in the land, and is in direct contrast with the way in which they had previously been exhausted by taxes by their rulers before the arrival of the Muslims.⁷⁹

1.1.4. The *'ushoor* (tithe)

The *'ushoor* is a tax that is collected from traders who pass through the borders of the Islamic state, whether they are coming in or going out. It is akin to customs duties in the modern age. It is collected by an official who is known as *al-Āshir*, i.e., the one who collects the *'ushoor*.⁸⁰

This tax did not exist at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) or the first caliph, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), because that was a period of calling people to Islam and jihad to spread the faith and establish the Islamic state. When the state expanded at the time of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) and its borders

⁷⁸ Op. cit., p. 135.

⁷⁹ *Ahl adh-Dhimmah fee al-Ḥaḍārah al-Islāmiyah*, p. 63.

⁸⁰ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 271; *Iqtisādīyāt al-Ḥarb*, p. 223.

spread east and west, and the state began to trade with the neighbouring states, then it became necessary to serve the public interests. 'Umar decided to impose this tax on those who came to the Muslim lands just as *ahl al-ḥarb* (non-Muslims who were in a state of war with Islam) imposed it on Muslim merchants who came to their lands, by way of responding in kind.

Historians⁸¹ are agreed that the first one to impose the '*ushr* in Islam was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). That occurred when the people of Manbij (near Aleppo in Syria) and people from beyond the sea of Yemen wrote to him asking him to allow them to come to the Arab lands with their merchandise and offering to pay one-tenth ('*ushr*) in return for that. 'Umar consulted the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) about that, and they agreed to it. So he was the first one to collect the '*ushoor*. But 'Umar wanted to be certain of the amount that other states were taking from the Muslim merchants when they crossed their borders, so he asked the Muslims: "What did the Ethiopians do to you when you enter their land?" They said, "They take one-tenth of what we have with us." He said, "Then take from them the same as they take from you."⁸² He also asked 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf, "How much do *ahl al-ḥarb* take from you when you enter their country?" He said, "One-tenth." 'Umar said, "Then take the same from them."⁸³

It was narrated that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari wrote to the caliph 'Umar and said: "Some of our Muslim merchants go to the land of *ahl al-ḥarb* and they take one-tenth from them." The caliph 'Umar wrote back to him and said, "Take from them what they take from the Muslim merchants. Take half of one-tenth from *ahl adh-dhimmah*,

⁸¹ *Siyāsat al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 128.

⁸² *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 651.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

and take from the Muslims one *dirham* for every forty, but take nothing if there is less than two hundred. If there is two hundred, then five *dirhams* are due, and whatever there is above that is to be worked out on the same basis.”⁸⁴

This new legislation played a role in regulating trade relations between states. Muslim traders earned a great deal when the doors of the Islamic state opened to trade, and goods came into the Muslim state from all corners of the earth. This naturally encouraged both Muslim and foreign traders to increase their efforts in importing and exporting goods from all parts of the world. Thus commercial centres became active in all parts of the Muslim state, including the Arabian Peninsula, and trade caravans came and went from all regions of Arabia to other Islamic regions. The ports of the Muslim world received the great ships which reached them from India, China and East Africa, laden with the most precious of goods. All these activities were evident during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the Umayyad state.⁸⁵

During 'Umar's reign, the tax-collectors took zakah from the wealth of the traders who passed by them, taking into account the set thresholds and whether a full year had passed. Anas ibn Mâlik said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sent me to collect the zakah of Iraq, and said: "If a Muslim's wealth reaches two hundred *dirhams*, take five *dirhams* from it. If it is more than two hundred, then take one *dirham* from every forty.”⁸⁶

Ash-Shaybâni stated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sent Ziyâd ibn Jarêr (or it was said Ziyâd ibn Ḥadeer) to collect the zakah from

⁸⁴ *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 145, 146; *Siyâsat al-Mâl*, p. 128.

⁸⁵ *At-Tijârah wa Ṭuruquha fee al-Jazeerah al-'Arabiyyah*, by Dr. Muhammad al-Imâdi, p. 332.

⁸⁶ *Al-Hayât al-Iqtisâdiyyah fee al-'Usoor al-Islâmiyyah al-Oola*, p. 101.

‘Ayn at-Tamr. He told him to take one-quarter of one-tenth (2.5%). He was to take one-half of one-tenth from *ahl adh-dhimmah* if they had trade goods, and one-tenth from *ahl al-ḥarb*. ‘Umar gave the ‘*Āshir* a salary from the wealth that he collected.⁸⁷

The one who studies the way in which the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) defined the taxes for different groups will reach the conclusion that he imposed the *‘ushr* (one-tenth) on *ahl al-ḥarb* because that is how they treated the Muslims. This is the principle of treating like with like. He imposed half of one-tenth on *ahl adh-dhimmah* to distinguish them from the Muslims, and in accordance with what he had previously imposed on the Christians of Banu Taghlib who agreed to let him take from them a *jizyah* that was double what he took from the Muslims in zakah.

What he collected from the Muslims was akin to zakah, and the threshold for zakah on trade goods is well known. This threshold is what he set as the minimum limit for taking it. He did not allow it to be taken from the Muslims and *ahl adh-dhimmah* more than once, so long as the capital remained and the value of the incoming goods did not become more than the capital, even if it was brought in more than once, until after one full year had passed. This was in accordance with the principle of treating like with like.

When *ahl al-ḥarb* increased the taxes that they took from the Muslims, the Muslims had the right to increase the taxes on the goods they brought into the Muslim lands by the same amount. Similarly, when they waived the taxes, the Muslims were bound to waive the taxes for them. This is how states operate nowadays, and it is called lifting customs barriers.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Sharḥ as-Sīyar al-Kabeer*, 5/2133, 2134; *al-Ḥayāt al-Iqtisādiyyah*, p. 101.

⁸⁸ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 132.

When the Muslims needed some goods and products that were imported to them, they lowered the taxes or let the merchants off, so as to encourage them to bring in more. The caliph 'Umar did that, when he told his agents to take one-half of one-tenth from the *ahl al-ḥarb* when they brought olive oil and grains into Arabia. He also let them off on other occasions.

It was narrated from az-Zuhri, from Sâlim, from his father, that 'Umar used to take one-tenth from the Nabataeans for cotton goods, and half of one-tenth for wheat and olive oil, so that more of these goods would be brought to Madeenah.⁸⁹

These financial regulations which were introduced at the time of the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) played a great role in facilitating trade between the Muslims and their neighbours and in bringing in many kinds of goods that the people wanted and needed. His concern was not limited only to organizing the income that came to the *bayt al-mâl*, rather he also looked at ways by means of which the income of the *bayt al-mâl* could be increased so that the land would be blessed with ease and prosperity. That included his interest in external trade and treating the merchants well, following up with the agents and governors and writing to them. He was keen that the state should get its rightful dues without being harsh in collecting them.⁹⁰

1.1.5. *Fay'* and *ghanâ'im* (types of booty)

Fay' refers to all kinds of wealth which reaches the Muslims from the *mushrikeen* without fighting. One-fifth (*khums*) of the *fay'* is to be distributed to those who are entitled to the *khums*⁹¹, whom

⁸⁹ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 133.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ *Târeekh ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. Jameel 'Abdullâh al-Maṣri, p. 322.

Allah defined in His Book when He (ﷻ) said:

«What Allah gave as booty [*Fay'*] to His Messenger [Muhammad] from the people of the townships — it is for Allah, His Messenger [Muhammad], the kindred [of Messenger Muhammad], the orphans, *al-Masākeen* [the poor], and the wayfarer.» (*Qur'an* 59: 7)

Ghanā'im refers to the wealth of *ahl al-ḥarb* that the Muslims acquire by force.⁹² Allah (ﷻ) says:

«And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth [1/5th] of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad)], [and also] the orphans, *al-Masākeen* [the poor] and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our slave [Muhammad] on the Day of Criterion [between right and wrong], the Day when the two forces met [the battle of Badr]; and Allah is Able to do all things.» (*Qur'an* 8: 41)

During the caliphate of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) the booty increased greatly because of the conquest of vast areas that were prosperous. The leaders of the Persians and Romans used to go out to the battlefield with all their wealth and splendour, which all fell into the hands of the Muslims, on occasion reaching amounts of 15,000 *dirhams* or 30,000 *dirhams*.⁹³

Great cities such as al-Madā'in, Jaloolā', Hamdhān, ar-Rayy, Aṣṭakhar and others were conquered, and the Muslims acquired a great deal of wealth, such as the carpet of Chosroes, which was 3600 square cubits, covered with gold and decorated with precious stones, with images of fruit in gems and covered with silk that had images of

⁹² *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 19, quoting from '*Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 183.

⁹³ '*Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 188.

flowing water drawn in gold. It was sold for twenty thousand *dirhams*. The Muslims also acquired a great deal of gold, silver and precious stones from the booty of Jaloola' and Nahawand. The *khums* of Jaloola' reached six million *dirhams*.⁹⁴

The greatest booty came from the land of as-Sawâd which 'Umar established as a *waqf* for the state, and the lands of aş-Şawâfi whose owners had been killed or had fled, and the lands of Chosroes and his family, the produce of which went to the state, so they were managed in order to provide extra income to the *bayt al-mâl*. It was said that its produce eventually reached seven million *dirhams*.

The booty was immense and it made the Muslims rich both on the individual and state level and raised the standard of living. Its effects were seen more clearly during the caliphate of 'Uthmân (ﷺ).⁹⁵

These were the most important sources of state income at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ).

1.2. The *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims and the establishment of official records

The *bayt al-mâl* is the place to which the income of the state is brought and the place from which all the outgoings of the state come, such as the stipends paid to the caliphs, armies, judges and agents and the expenses of public facilities and other things that belong to the state.⁹⁶

Official records (*dawâween*, sing. *diwân*) refers to the documents in which are recorded the affairs of the state. The word

⁹⁴ 'Aşr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah, p. 189.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm, p. 155.

diwān was given by the Persians to the place where the scribes and employees in charge of these records gather.⁹⁷

Initially the Islamic state did not have a *bayt al-māl* in the sense that was known later on, because the policy of the Messenger (ﷺ) was not to delay in dividing or spending wealth. Abu Bakr followed the same method as the Prophet (ﷺ), and 'Umar followed the same way as his two companions at the beginning of his caliphate, until the authority of the Islamic state spread east and west. Then he started to think of a way to manage the wealth and booty, and the income from *jizyah*, *kharāj* and *zakah*, that was being accumulated by the caliph as the result of the conquests. Moreover, the army had expanded and needed a way to manage its needs and record the names of its men, lest some of them miss out on payments and others be paid more than once.

The conquests and victories continued, and wealth continued to increase in a way that the Muslims had never known before. 'Umar decided that it was beyond the capability of the caliph and his governors to keep track of everything, and that it was economically unwise to leave control of financial affairs in the hands of the agents and governors without regulating it or keeping accounts. The result of that thinking was the establishment of rules to control the way in which this wealth was handled. Thus the *diwān* was set up. 'Umar was the first one to establish the *diwān* (official records) in the Islamic state.⁹⁸

How that happened was narrated by the historians: "Abu Hurayrah said that he came from al-Baḥrayn with five hundred thousand *dirhams* and I went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), who asked me about the people and I told him. Then he asked me, 'What

⁹⁷ *Muqaddamat Ibn Khaldun*, 243; *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 155.

⁹⁸ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 157.

have you brought?' I said, 'I have brought five hundred thousand *dirhams*.' He said, 'Woe to you! Do you know what you are saying?' I said, 'Yes, a hundred thousand, and a hundred thousand, and a hundred thousand, and a hundred thousand, and a hundred thousand.' He said, 'You must be tired, go back to your family and sleep, and come to me in the morning.' The next morning, I went to him and he again asked, 'What have you brought?' I said, 'I have brought five hundred thousand *dirhams*.' He said, 'Woe to you! Do you know what you are saying?' I said, 'Yes, a hundred thousand...' and I counted it five times on my fingers. He said, 'Are you sure?' I said, 'I do not know anything other than that.' He ascended the *minbar* and praised and glorified Allah, then he said, 'O' people, a great deal of wealth has come to us. If you wish, we will give it to you by measure, or if you wish we will count it out for you.' A man stood up and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I think that these Persians keep records for themselves.'⁹⁹ 'Umar liked the idea¹⁰⁰, so he consulted the Muslims about keeping records. Some of them gave their suggestions, except for al-Waleed ibn Hishâm ibn al-Mugheerah, who said, 'I went to Syria and I saw that their kings kept records and organized the army. So keep records and organize the army.' According to some reports, the one who said that was Khâlid ibn al-Waleed."¹⁰¹

Some historians state that there was one of the Persian satraps in Madeenah, and when he saw that 'Umar was not sure what to do, he said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the rulers of Persia have something that they call *diwân*. Whatever income they get and whatever they spend is all controlled and nothing is left unrecorded. The people who are entitled to stipends are all written down under different categories with no room for error." 'Umar liked this idea

⁹⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/300, 302, a *ṣaheeh* report.

¹⁰⁰ *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldoon*, p. 244; *al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 48, 49.

¹⁰¹ *Al-Ahkâm as-Sultâniyah*, Pp. 226, 227; *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 436.

and said, "Describe it for me." So the satrap described it for him, then he compiled the official records of those who were entitled to stipends.¹⁰²

'Uthmān liked the idea of keeping official records and he suggested: "I think that there is enough wealth for everybody, but if no records are kept of who has taken something and who has not, I fear that money may be wasted."¹⁰³

These are some of the reports which indicate that 'Umar consulted those who were with him numerous times. There is a difference of opinion among the historians as to the year in which the official records were set up. Some say that it was in 15 A.H., such as aṭ-Ṭabari, who was followed by Ibn al-Atheer and others. Other historians say that it was in Muḥarram 20 A.H., such as al-Balādhuri, al-Wāqidi, al-Māwirdi, Ibn Khaldūn¹⁰⁴ and others. It is more likely to have happened in 20 A.H., because in 15 A.H. the battle of al-Qādisiyah took place, and the conquests of Iraq, Syria and Egypt were not completed until after that.¹⁰⁵

'Umar divided the wealth in a manner different to that employed by Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr had divided the wealth among the people equally, whereas 'Umar divided it on the basis of seniority in Islam (who had come to Islam first), participation in jihad and support for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).¹⁰⁶ 'Umar thought that this was what should be done during the time of Abu Bakr, and when he saw Abu Bakr dividing the wealth equally among the people he said to him: "Are you giving equal shares to those who migrated twice

¹⁰² *Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyah*, p. 226; *Tāreekh al-Islāmi as-Siyāsi*, 1/456.

¹⁰³ *Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyah*, p. 226; *Siyāsāt al-Māl*, p. 158.

¹⁰⁴ *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn*, p. 244; *Siyāsāt al-Māl*, p. 159.

¹⁰⁵ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 159.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

and prayed facing both *qiblahs* and to those who became Muslim during the year of the Conquest out of fear of the sword?" Abu Bakr said to him: "What they did was for the sake of Allah and their reward is with Allah. In this world all that you need is what a traveller needs." 'Umar said to him: "Do not make one who fought against the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) like one who fought alongside him."¹⁰⁷

Hence 'Umar divided the people into different categories when he allocated wealth, as follows:

- ❖ Those who had come to Islam first and strove hard, by means of whose jihad this wealth had become possible
- ❖ Those who brought benefits to the Muslims, such as governors and scholars who brought both worldly and spiritual benefits
- ❖ Those who strove to ward off harm from the Muslims, such as the *Mujâhideen* who were fighting for the sake of Allah, soldiers, spies, advisors and so on
- ❖ Those who were in need¹⁰⁸

This policy of dividing wealth is what 'Umar referred to when he said: "No one has more right to this wealth than anyone else, but a man is paid according to his seniority, or according to how much benefit he brings to the Muslims, or according to how much he strives to ward off harm, or according to his needs."¹⁰⁹

'Umar called 'Aqeel ibn Abi Tâlib, Makhramah ibn Nawfal and Jubayr ibn Muṭ'im — who were young men of Quraysh — and said: "Write down the people's names according to their status."

¹⁰⁷ *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sultâniyah* by al-Mâwirdi, p. 201.

¹⁰⁸ *As-Siyâsah ash-Shar'iyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, p. 48; *Awlawiyât al-Fârooq*, p. 358.

¹⁰⁹ *Jâmi' al-Uṣool*, 2/71; *Akḥbâr 'Umar*, p. 94.

They started with Banu Hâshim and wrote down their names, then they wrote down Abu Bakr and his people, then 'Umar and his people, and they wrote down all the tribes, and gave that to 'Umar. When he looked at it, he said: "No, this is not how I wanted it to be. Start with those who are closest to the Prophet (ﷺ), then the next closest and the next closest, and put 'Umar where Allah put him."

Banu 'Adiyy came to the caliph 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) and said: "You are the successor (*khaleefah*) of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), the successor of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), and Abu Bakr was the successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Why don't you put yourself in the category where these people who wrote it down suggested you should be?" He said, "No, no, O' Banu 'Adiyy. Do you want to take advantage of me? Do you want me to give my *hasanât* to you? You are to be placed in the right position even if it is at the bottom of the list. I have two companions who followed a path, and if I follow a different path I will end up in a different place. By Allah, we have not reached such a high position in this world and we do not hope for reward from Allah except by virtue of Muhammad (ﷺ). He is our leader and his people are the noblest of the Arabs, then the next closest and the next closest..."¹¹⁰

'Umar began to record in his official records the names of those who were entitled to stipends and how much they were entitled to. This was called *diwân al-jund* (the record of the troops) on the basis that all the Muslim Arabs were soldiers in *jihad* for the sake of Allah. In his record of the troops he started with Banu Hâshim, those who were closest to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), then those who were next closest, then those who came after them in different categories, and he gave each of the Muslims a certain amount. He allocated stipends to the wives and concubines of the Prophet (ﷺ),

¹¹⁰ *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, p. 436; *al-Aḥkâm as-Sultāniyah*, p. 227.

and to all the Muslims, men, women and children from birth, and slaves, in varying amounts.¹¹¹

By devising the record, 'Umar demonstrated his concern for jihad for the sake of Allah. He paid a great deal of attention to the *Mujâhideen* and the protection of their rights. The records of troops were kept in Arabic in Madeenah, at the hands of a number of brilliant men of Quraysh and those who had knowledge of their lineages. Then he ordered that similar records be kept in other parts of the Muslim world. These records were kept in the languages of the conquered lands, and were not translated into Arabic until the caliphate of 'Abdul-Malik ibn Marwân and his son al-Waleed.

After compiling these records, 'Umar began to collect the wealth for a year, then he divided it among the people, because he thought that collecting it would bring a greater blessing. Collecting the wealth needed trustworthy people. Zayd ibn Arqam was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl* at the time of 'Umar.¹¹² Abu 'Ubayd narrated with his isnad from 'Abdul-Qâri — from the tribe of al-Qârah — that he said: "I was in-charge of the *bayt al-mâl* at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (رضي الله عنه)." ¹¹³

1.3. Expenditure of the state at the time of 'Umar

The expenditure of the *bayt al-mâl* may be divided into three categories: expenditure of zakah, expenditure of *jizyah*, *kharâj* and '*ushoor*, and expenditure of *ghanâ'im* (booty). The Qur'an and

¹¹¹ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 160.

¹¹² *Subh al-A'sha fee Qawâneen al-Insha'* by al-Qalqashandi, 1/89.

¹¹³ *Fiqh az-Zakâh*, 1/318; This source and the one above are from *Siyâsat al-Mâl*, p. 160.

Sunnah, and the actions of the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) explain the ways in which these types of wealth were spent.¹¹⁴

1.3.1. Expenditure of zakah

Allah describes eight categories of people to whom zakah is to be given, as He (ﷻ) says:

«*Aṣ-Ṣadaqāt* [here it means Zakah] are only for the *Fuqarā'* [poor], and *al-Masākeen* [the poor] and those employed to collect [the funds]; and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined [towards Islam]; and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause [i.e. for *Mujāhidoon* — those fighting in a holy battle], and for the wayfarer [a traveller who is cut off from everything]; a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.»
(*Qur'an* 9: 60)

The poor and needy at the time of 'Umar were given enough of this wealth to distance them from poverty and want and raise them to the lowest levels of independence and prosperity.¹¹⁵ 'Umar used to say: "When you give, give enough to make a poor man independent of means."¹¹⁶

This was 'Umar's wise policy. He would give enough and more to who were temporarily unable to work because of sickness etc. For those who were chronically incapacitated, he would still give them zakah. 'Umar's policy went beyond the Muslims to include the people of the Book too, after the *jizyah* had been waived for them.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 169.

¹¹⁵ *An-Nidhām al-Islāmī al-Muqārīn*, p. 112; *Siyāsāt al-Māl*, p. 171.

¹¹⁶ *Al-Amwāl* by Abu 'Ubayd, 4/676; *Siyāsāt al-Māl*, p. 171.

¹¹⁷ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 172.

Another of the groups on whom zakah may be spent is those who are employed to collect it, who have various roles and tasks, all of which have to do with the organizing and calculating of zakah, such as finding out for whom it is obligatory, on what kind of wealth it is obligatory, how much is due, to whom it must be paid, how many of them there are, what the extent of their need is and how much is sufficient for them, and other matters which need a full team of experts and specialists and people to support them.¹¹⁸

With regard to those whose hearts are to be reconciled, 'Umar waived their share, because Islam was in a strong position during his caliphate, so there was no need to spend zakah wealth on this category, which is one of the eight categories mentioned in the verse.¹¹⁹ But nowadays there are still people whose hearts need to be reconciled or won over to Islam in one way or another, and there are those who meet the conditions of this category.¹²⁰ Some opponents of Islam have used this story of 'Umar's waiving the share of those whose hearts are to be reconciled to make their claim that by doing so, 'Umar stopped a ruling that is mentioned in Qur'an. This claim is not correct, and it ignores the facts of the matter, because in fact 'Umar stopped the share of those whose hearts are to be won over for a reason, which is that Islam had become powerful and strong after it had been weak at the beginning. He thought that there was no need to win over the hearts of these people after Islam had become victorious and powerful.¹²¹ The *Ṣaḥābah* agreed with 'Umar's decision and their agreement was not given without thought, rather they were convinced of the reasons for stopping the share to those whose hearts were to be won over, because Islam had become strong which meant

¹¹⁸ Op. cit., p. 173.

¹¹⁹ *ʿAsr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 202.

¹²⁰ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 175.

¹²¹ Ibid, Pp. 177, 178.

there was now no need to worry about a small number who carried no weight, since many nations had now entered Islam. There was no reason to fear these people. Rather the fear was that they might become dependent on this income. Moreover, their share was not something to be inherited, generation after generation.¹²²

'Umar did not look at this text about those whose hearts are to be reconciled in a rigid way. He understood that the aim of the text was to support Islam by bringing the leaders of the Arabs into the faith and making those who became Muslim steadfast in Islam. He looked at the reason behind the text, not the apparent meaning. Allah had made Islam victorious and increased its numbers, so giving these shares now — in 'Umar's view — was a kind of humiliation. The reason for which Allah had allocated a share of zakah to those whose hearts were to be reconciled was no longer present. Based on this, 'Umar stopped this share and did not give it to them.

Based on this sound understanding, we cannot say that 'Umar abolished acting on this Qur'anic verse which speaks of giving a share of zakah to those whose hearts are to be reconciled, because abolishing comes under the heading of abrogation, and no one can abrogate Qur'an except the Lawgiver. Hence abrogation came to a stop after the death of the Messenger (ﷺ).¹²³ 'Umar was paying attention to changing circumstances as we have stated above.¹²⁴

Zakah is also to be spent on freeing slaves, helping debtors, supporting jihad for the sake of Allah, and helping wayfarers. The Qur'an paid a great deal of attention to the matter of wayfarers and gave them a share of zakah and *fay'*, and of the *khums* of war booty. The attention that Islam paid to travellers, strangers and those who

¹²² *Al-Ab'ād as-Siyāsaiyah li Maḥmūd al-Amn fee al-Islām*, p. 306.

¹²³ *Al-Ijtihād fee al-Fiqh al-Islāmi*, Pp. 132, 133.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 134.

were cut off or stranded is unrivalled in any other system or law. This concern is confirmed by the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr. During his reign, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) set up a special institution known as *dar ad-daqqeq*, in which were kept flour (*daqqeq*), *saweeq*, dates, raisins and other necessary goods which were used to help stranded travellers, guests and those who came to stay as guests of 'Umar. 'Umar placed on the routes between Makkah and Madeenah whatever stranded travellers might need to get from one oasis to the next.¹²⁵

This definition of the eight categories who were entitled to zakah required the state to know their names and how many of them there were. So records had to be kept in each land, and also in the capital of the state. A special department was set up for zakah under the auspices of the caliphate, with branches in each province. That was set up during 'Umar's caliphate after the public records had been set up.¹²⁶

If we look at the eight categories mentioned in the verse, we will notice that they encompass religious, political and social interests of calling for jihad for the sake of Allah, forming armies, striving to put an end to poverty, paying off debts and meeting the needs of the needy. In other words they include all the requirements of society and the establishment of security, love and harmony amongst people.¹²⁷

1.3.2. Expenditure of *jizyah*, *kharâj* and *'ushoor*

These funds were spent on stipends for the caliph, governors, troops, *ahl al-bayt*, the wives of the *Mujâhideen*, etc.

¹²⁵ *At-Tabaqât*, 3/283.

¹²⁶ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, p. 184.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

The caliph's stipend

Five thousand *dirhams* (or six thousand, according to another report) were allocated to the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

Governors' stipends

This is what was given to the governors of the various regions. During his caliphate, 'Umar appointed a strong and resolute governor to rule and administer each province, and he provided him with a number of helpers, assistants, collectors, judges, scribes, workers to deal with *kharāj* and zakah, and others. The governor was to lead the prayers and to lead the people at times of war, and he had another agent under him whose role was to collect money. There were other skilled and experienced workers whose job was to measure land, calculate taxes and keep records of the names of people. They were given salaries commensurate with their positions and the tasks required of them, how near or far the region was, its degree of prosperity and whether the cost of living there was high or low. No set date was given for paying out stipends.¹²⁸ We will discuss these agents and workers in more detail when we speak about the institution of *al-'ummāl* (agents).

Army salaries

'Umar was concerned about the army and he organized records for the army (*diwān*). He divided wealth on the basis of close relationship to the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) and seniority in Islam.¹²⁹ Hence those who were at the top of the list for a regular salary were the family of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), namely Banu Hāshim. Al-'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) would take the payment and distribute it among them. Then came the

¹²⁸ *Siyāsat al-Māl fee al-Islām*, p. 198.

¹²⁹ *Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyah*, p. 227; *Siyāsat al-Māl*, p. 119.

wives of the Prophet (ﷺ), to each of whom was given a salary separate from that of *ahl al-bayt*.

The rest of the Muslims were divided into categories based on their participation in jihad for the sake of Allah, starting with those who had been at Badr, then those who had fought after Badr and up to al-Ḥudaybiyah, then those who had fought from al-Ḥudaybiyah up to the end of the Riddah wars, then those who had been present at al-Qâdisiyah and al-Yarmook, and so on. He allocated special funds to the wives of the warriors and their children from birth. He did not ignore slaves and foundlings either, he allocated an annual stipend for them, the least of which was one hundred *dirhams*, which increased when they reached puberty.¹³⁰ He also allocated between one and two thousand to freed slaves.¹³¹

The stipend given to the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) was ten thousand *dirhams* annually, except for Juwayriyah, Safiyyah and Maymoonah, who were given less than that. Then it was increased to twelve thousand *dirhams*, except for Safiyyah and Juwayriyah, who were given six thousand *dirhams*. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) asked for equal amounts to be given to all the Mothers of the Believers, and 'Umar agreed to that.

The stipend for the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr was four thousand *dirhams* for each person each year, except for 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, who was allocated three thousand five hundred *dirhams*. The reason given was that his father had brought him with him when he migrated, so he was not like one who had migrated for himself.¹³² 'Abdullâh had been a child at the time of the Hijrah. Then one thousand was added to the stipend of the *Muhâjireen*, so their

¹³⁰ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/301.

¹³¹ *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/153, 154.

¹³² *Asr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 214.

stipend became five thousand *dirhams* annually.¹³³ It seems that this was given only to those of the *Muhājireen* and Anṣār who had been present at Badr.¹³⁴ Those who had been present at the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah were given a stipend of three thousand *dirhams* each year.¹³⁵

Every newborn was given a stipend of one hundred *dirhams*. It was originally allocated to weanlings, then it was allocated to newborns lest parents be too hasty in weaning their children.

With regard to freed slaves, the nobles among them, such as al-Hormuzān when he became Muslim, were given two thousand *dirhams* and other allowances.

In addition to the annual stipend, 'Umar used to give out various other payments.¹³⁶ In addition to the stipends and gifts mentioned above, each individual was also given a measure of wheat every month.¹³⁷ The caliph 'Umar (ؓ) said at the end of his reign: "If wealth increases, I would give each man four thousand *dirhams*: a thousand for travelling, a thousand for his weapon, a thousand to leave behind for his family, and a thousand for his horse and mule."¹³⁸

'Umar believed that every Muslim had a right to the *bayt al-māl* from the cradle to the grave. He declared this principle when he said: "By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god (which he repeated three times), there is no one who does not have a right to this wealth, whether it is given to him or withheld from him. I am just like

¹³³ Op. cit., p. 214.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 215

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 202.

¹³⁸ *Siyāsāt al-Māl fī al-Islām*, p. 203; *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/298.

any one of you with regard to it, but we are all entitled to it in accordance with our position as indicated in the Book of Allah and our position with regard to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). So a man is paid according to his seniority, or according to how much benefit he brings to the Muslims, or according to how much he strives to ward off harm, or according to his needs. By Allah, if I live, a shepherd in the hills of San'â' (Sana) will get his share of this wealth where he is, before he dies.¹³⁹

It is important to explain 'Umar's point of view in not allocating equal shares among the Muslims, his clear support for the relatives of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the senior *Ṣaḥâbah* among the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr, and his attention to seniority in Islam and contribution to jîhad. Undoubtedly the group that had acquired all this plentiful wealth during his caliphate was the group on whose shoulders the Islamic state was built. They also had more understanding of Islam and its aims, and adhered more closely to its laws, and they were more righteous and pious in dealing with wealth and using it to achieve the social aims by means of spending. Supporting this group economically strengthened its power in society and made it more able to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. It may be noted that 'Umar resolved to change this policy of preference and give everyone equal shares. He clearly stated that at the end of his caliphate when he said: "If I live until next year, I will make the last of the people equal to the first, and I will treat them all the same."¹⁴⁰

'Umar's views on public wealth were expressed when he said: "Allah has made me the keeper of this wealth, and the divider thereof." Then he said: "Rather Allah has decided how it is to be

¹³⁹ *At-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/299; *Kitâb al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 50.

¹⁴⁰ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 216; *al-Amwâl* by Ibn Zanjawayh, 2/576.

divided.”¹⁴¹ He wept when he saw the huge amount of wealth that had been brought to the *bayt al-māl* during the conquest of Persia. When ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf pointed out to him that this was a day of thanksgiving and joy, ‘Umar said: “No. This is never given to a people but it stirs up enmity and hatred among them.”¹⁴² He looked at the wealth from the conquest of Jaloolā’ and recited the verse:

﴿Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver...﴾ (Qur’an 3: 14)

He said: “O’ Allah, we cannot help but rejoice in that which has been beautified for us, so make me spend it rightfully, and I seek refuge in You from its evil.”¹⁴³

1.3.3. The expenditure of *ghanâ’im*

With regard to the distribution of *ghanâ’im*, it was to be divided as described in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth [1/5th] of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad)], [and also] the orphans, *al-Masâkeen* [the poor] and the wayfarer...﴾ (Qur’an 8: 41)

As for the remaining four-fifths of the booty, they were distributed among the warriors, with each horseman getting three shares — two for his horse and one for him — and each foot soldier getting one share.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ The report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. ‘*Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 216.

¹⁴² ‘*Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 217, the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁴³ ‘*Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 217, the report is *ḥasan*.

¹⁴⁴ *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 22.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) was alive, he had a share which he spent on himself and his wives. Whatever was left of these shares was spent on public interests or on the poor and needy. The relatives of the Messenger (ﷺ) had the second share, namely Banu Hâshim and Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib, who had submitted to Islam and become Muslims. After the death of the Prophet (ﷺ), the people differed concerning these two shares, the share of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the share of his relatives. Some said that the share of the Messenger (ﷺ) should be given to the caliph after him, and others said that the share of the relatives should be given to the relatives of the Messenger (ﷺ). Another group said that the share of the relatives should be given to the relatives of the caliph after him. Then they agreed to spend these shares on mounts and weapons.¹⁴⁵ Thus the two shares were spent in the public interests of the Muslims, such as preparing armies, guarding the borders and working to strengthen the state at the time of the second caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه).

The shares allotted to the poor and needy and wayfarers remained as they had been at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), and no change was made at the time of the second caliph (رضي الله عنه).¹⁴⁶

These are some of the features of the financial institutions at the time of 'Umar, and how he developed them. He was very careful with public funds, as can be seen from his words: "I tell you about what I am keeping for myself from the wealth of Allah: a suit for winter, a suit for summer, a mount for Hajj and 'Umrah, and food for my family like any man of Quraysh who is not the richest or poorest among them. I am a Muslim man and I go through what you go through."¹⁴⁷ And he used to say: "O' Allah, You know that I eat

¹⁴⁵ *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 22.

¹⁴⁶ *Siyâsat al-Mâl fee al-Islâm*, Pp. 205, 206.

¹⁴⁷ *Târeekh al-Madeenah* by Ibn Shihbah, 2/698; *'Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 218.

nothing but my own food and I wear nothing but my own clothes, and I take nothing but what is my right.”¹⁴⁸ And he used to say: “I consider the wealth of Allah like the wealth of an orphan:

﴿... And whoever [amongst guardians] is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable [according to his labour]...﴾ (Qur'an 4: 6).”

1.3.4. Matters pertaining to the economic development of the state

Issuance of Islamic currency

Currency made of precious metals such as gold and silver is regarded as an essential means of life in society, especially in dealings between nations and states. Our focus here — when Islam had acquired a state in which Muslims and others lived, and where neighbouring nations and states had systems and cultures which continued to interact with the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar and other Muslim caliphs and rulers — is the administrative method followed by 'Umar with regard to currency, whether within the Islamic state or in interactions with other states.¹⁴⁹ The historical information indicates that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb kept the currency that had been in circulation before Islam and at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr. These were Byzantine coins with Christian inscriptions, or Persian coins with Zoroastrian inscriptions. It seems that he approved of the official standard of coins that was known at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, and he added to them the word “*jā'iz*” (valid) to distinguish them from counterfeits.¹⁵⁰ The one who minted coins outside the state and

¹⁴⁸ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/313; *Asr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 318.

¹⁴⁹ *Al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 364.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 366.

approved of dealing with them, and decided on the weight of the Islamic *dirham* was 'Umar (ﷺ). Al-Mâwardi says: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was the one who decided on the weight of the Islamic *dirham*."¹⁵¹ Al-Maqreezi says: "The first one to mint coins in Islam was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in 18 A.H., imprinting over Persian inscriptions, adding the words "*al-Ḥamdu Lillâh* (praise be to Allah)" or "*Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh* (there is no god but Allah), and adding the name of the caliph 'Umar on part of it."¹⁵² Thus 'Umar established a system during his rule for an essential means of living for the Muslims and others. He was followed by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and others who developed this idea further as life and civilization progressed.¹⁵³

Allocation of land

Abu Bakr continued to follow the Prophet's method of allocation of land to the people for the purpose of making use of it. He gave to az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm some unused land between al-Jarf and Qanât¹⁵⁴ and he gave al-Khaḍramah (a village in al-Yamâmah) to Majâ'ah ibn Marârah al-Ḥanafi. He wanted to give to 'Uyaynah ibn Ḥasn al-Fazâri and al-Aqra' ibn Ḥâbis at-Tameemi some arid land — in which there was no grass and it was of no use — which they wanted to put to some use; but then he changed his mind, following the advice of 'Umar (ﷺ) who said that there was no need to reconcile their hearts towards Islam. 'Umar said to them: «"The Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) used to seek to reconcile your hearts, but at that time Islam was weak. Now Allah

¹⁵¹ *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sultâniyah*, p. 147.

¹⁵² *Shudhoor al-'Uqood fee Dhikr an-Nuqood*, Pp. 31-33.

¹⁵³ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar*, p. 367.

¹⁵⁴ *At-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/104 - the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*; *Asr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 220.

has made Islam victorious, so go and work hard.”»¹⁵⁵

It is clear that ‘Umar’s objection was not to the allocation of land per se, rather it was to the people themselves; he did not think that their hearts needed to be reconciled to Islam. ‘Umar gave a lot of land to people who would make good use of it, following the Prophet’s policy. He declared: “O’ people, whoever revives dead (i.e., unused) land, it is his.”¹⁵⁶ This is supported by weak reports which confirm that ‘Umar (ؓ) took back land that he had allocated if it was not used properly. A weak report states that there was a three-year limit from the date of the allocation of the land. It is proven that ‘Umar allocated unused land to Khawāt ibn Jubayr¹⁵⁷ and he gave to az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām all the land of al-‘Aqeeq. He gave the land of Yanbu‘ to ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, where fresh water started flowing through it. ‘Ali (ؓ) gave it as a *waqf* for charity to the poor. There are other weak reports which say that ‘Umar allocated land to a number of other *Ṣaḥābah*.¹⁵⁸

2. The Judicial System

When Islam spread and the state expanded at the time of ‘Umar, and the Muslims came into contact with other nations, the new situation demanded the development of the judicial system. The caliph became very busy and the job of the governors in the various regions became more complex, and the number of fights and disputes increased. ‘Umar decided to separate the departments of government in the provinces and to give the judges independent authority, so that

¹⁵⁵ Bukhari, *at-Tāreekh aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 1/81; *‘Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 221.

¹⁵⁶ *‘Aṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 221, the report is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 222.

the governors would be free to run the affairs of their provinces. Thus the judicial system became independent of other departments, and 'Umar was the first one to give the judges their own independent department. He appointed judges in the Islamic regions, in Koofah, Baṣra, Syria and Egypt, and he gave the judges authority for which they were answerable directly to him, whether they were appointed by the caliph himself or by one of the governors on his behalf. This indicates that the Islamic leadership was represented in the person of 'Umar and that he was not incapable of setting out basic rules to organize the affairs of state and define the powers and authority of various government departments. Europe discovered this principle in theoretical terms in the eighteenth century, and considered it a new step in the organization of state affairs and protection of citizens' rights, but it was not put into practice until the beginning of the nineteenth century, i.e., after the French Revolution. But Islam affirmed this principle fourteen centuries before, and regarded it as fundamental to its system. This principle existed from the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), when he sent Mu'âdh to Yemen and asked him: "How will you judge between people, O' Mu'âdh?" Mu'âdh explained that he would judge according to the Book of Allah; if he did not find an answer there, he would judge according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If he did not find an answer there, then he would try his best to work it out. And the Messenger (ﷺ) approved of that.¹⁵⁹

'Umar set out to develop the judicial system and other things that were connected to it. It was during his era that the principle of separating the judiciary from other government departments was practised clearly in people's lives. The independence of the judiciary did not prevent 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) from intervening in some cases. It may be that he allowed some of his governors to act as judges in addition

¹⁵⁹ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 2/53.

to their executive powers, and he corresponded with them concerning judicial matters. He corresponded with al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah concerning judicial matters when he was the governor of Baṣra, then of Koofah. He corresponded with Mu'âwiyah, his governor in Syria, concerning a judicial dispute. He corresponded with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari concerning some cases. The judge was appointed for the whole province, either by the caliph or by the governor acting on the orders of the caliph. The seat of the judge was the capital of the province, and he was responsible for judicial matters in his province.¹⁶⁰

The setting up of an independent judiciary was done mostly in the large provinces, such as Koofah and Egypt. In some cases governors acted as both governors and judges, if judicial matters did not distract them from their gubernatorial duties. He sent this description of the judge's role to them.

In some cases 'Umar passed judgement even though he had judges in Madeenah.¹⁶¹ Among the judges whose role was limited by 'Umar during his caliphate to that of a judge was 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood, whom 'Umar appointed as the judge of Koofah. Qatâdah narrated from Abu Majlaz that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sent 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir to lead the people of Koofah in prayer, and he sent 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood to be in charge of the *bayt al-mâl* and the judiciary.¹⁶²

— Salmân ibn Rabee'ah was appointed by 'Umar as the judge of Baṣrah, then of al-Qâdisiyah.

— Qays ibn Abi al-Âṣ was the judge of Egypt.

¹⁶⁰ *Al-Qaḍâ' fee al-Islâm*, by 'Aṭiyah Muṣṭafa, p. 77.

¹⁶¹ *An-Nidhâm al-Qaḍâ'i fee al-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, by al-Qaṭṭân, p. 47.

¹⁶² *Akhbâr al-Qaḍâ'* by Wakee', 2/188.

Those who were appointed as both governors and judges included the following:

— Nâfi' al-Khuzâ'i, the governor of Makkah. Ibn 'Abdul-Barr stated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb appointed him as governor of Makkah, although there were leaders of Quraysh among them. Then he dismissed him and appointed Khâlid ibn al-'Âş ibn Hishâm ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomi.¹⁶³

— Ya'lâ ibn Umayyah, the governor of Şan'â' (Sana).

— Sufiyân ibn 'Abdullâh ath-Thaqafi, the governor of aţ-Ṭâ'if.

— Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, the governor of Koofah.

— Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân, the governor of Syria.

— 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âş ath-Thaqafi, the governor of Baḥrain and Oman.

— Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, the governor of Başra.

— 'Umayr ibn Sa'd, the governor of Homs.

Among these were some whom 'Umar kept as judges as well as appointing them as governors, as he did with Mu'âwiyah, and some from whom he took away the role of judge and limited them to their role as governor, as he did with al-Mugheerah and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. Among the judges whom 'Umar appointed in Madeenah were 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib and Zayd ibn Thâbit. It was narrated from Nâfi' that 'Umar appointed Zayd ibn Thâbit in charge of the judiciary and allocated a stipend for him.¹⁶⁴

— As-Sâ'ib ibn Abi Yazeed.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ *An-Nidhâm al-Qaḍâ'i fee al-'Ahd an-Nabawi*, p. 49.

¹⁶⁴ *Akhbâr al-Qaḍâ'* by Wakee', 1/108.

¹⁶⁵ *Waqa'i' Nadwah an-Nadhm al-Islâmiyah fee Abu Dhabi*, 1/375.

2.1. The most important letters from 'Umar to the judges

'Umar set out some valuable legislation for the judiciary system. Many scholars of Islamic fiqh have sought to explain and comment on this legislation. We find 'Umar's legislation on the judiciary in his letter to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, in which he said:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

From the slave of Allah the son of al-Khaṭṭāb, *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, to 'Abdullāh ibn Qays¹⁶⁶, peace be upon you.

Judging (the judicial system) is a confirmed obligation and a way to be followed. Try to understand when cases are presented to you, for there is no use in a person presenting his case if it is not understood. Treat people equally when you address them so that no noble man will hope that you will side with him unfairly and no weak man will despair of your justice. The burden of proof rests with the plaintiff and the oath is required of one who denies it. It is permissible to make a deal between Muslims, except a deal that permits something that is forbidden or forbids something that is permitted. If you passed a judgement yesterday then examined it further in your mind and are guided to a different conclusion, then that should not prevent you from returning to the truth, for truth is eternal, and returning to the truth is better than persisting in falsehood. Examine carefully each issue which you are unsure about, where there is no text in the Qur'an and Sunnah, and try to find a similar case; draw analogies and see which is more likely to be pleasing to Allah and closest to the truth. Whoever claims that someone owes him some dues, set a time limit for him to produce his evidence. If he produces evidence, then restore his rights to him; otherwise ask him to drop his claim. That is better

¹⁶⁶ 'Abdullāh ibn Qays is Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. [Author]

so as to eliminate any doubt. The Muslims are basically of good character, except one who has been lashed as a *ḥadd* punishment or who is known for bearing false witness. Allah is in charge of what is hidden in people's hearts. Judgement must be based on evidence and oaths. Beware of becoming impatient, because judging in accordance with truth brings a great reward from Allah and stores up a great deal of reward (in the Hereafter). Whoever has a good intention and checks himself, Allah will be sufficient for him (and he need not worry about people), but whoever shows an attitude to people which Allah knows is not his true attitude, Allah will expose him. Think of the reward of Allah in this world and in the Hereafter. And peace (be upon you)."¹⁶⁷

This letter sums up the etiquette of the judge and the principles according to which judgement should be passed. The scholars have been explaining it and commenting on it for many centuries, and it is still a source of amazement and pride for everyone who reads it. Even if nothing else had been reported from 'Umar, he would be counted as one of the greatest thinkers and legislators on the basis of this letter. If it had been written by a head of state nowadays when the rules and regulations on running courts are so widespread, and discussions on such matters are something that children read about in school, it would still be something great and important. So how about if we remember that 'Umar wrote it fourteen centuries ago, and he did not quote it from a book or learn it from someone else. Rather it came from his own mind, and is just one example of the fruit of the faith which Muhammad (ﷺ) planted in his heart, when he came to him in Dâr al-Arqam and said, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'een* by Ibn al-Qayyim, 1/85.

¹⁶⁸ *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 174.

Another of the important letters that 'Umar wrote concerning this matter was his letter to Abu 'Ubaydah in which he said:

"I have written to you a letter in which I have not spared myself or you any goodness. Adhere to these five characteristics and your religious commitment will be safe and you will succeed. When two disputants come to you, you must look for clear proof and a definitive oath. Be gentle with the weak one so that he will have the courage to speak. Take care of the stranger, for if the investigation into his case takes too long, he may give up and go back to his family. Strive to bring about reconciliation, unless it becomes clear to you who is in the right and who is in the wrong."¹⁶⁹

'Umar wrote to Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân concerning judicial matters:

"I have written to you a letter in which I have not spared myself or you any goodness. Adhere to the five characteristics and your religious commitment will be safe and you will succeed. When two disputants come to you, you must look for clear proof and a definitive oath. Be gentle with the weak one so that he will have the courage to speak. Take care of the stranger, for if the investigation into his case takes too long, he may give up and go back to his family. The one who neglected his right is the one who did not take care of him. Treat them equally and give them equal attention. Strive to bring about a reconciliation, unless it becomes clear to you who is in the right and who is in the wrong."¹⁷⁰

He wrote to the judge Shurayḥ concerning *ijtihād* and said: "If a case is referred to you, judge concerning it according to what is in the Book of Allah. If it is not mentioned in the Book of Allah, then judge concerning it according to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of

¹⁶⁹ *Majmoo'ah al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 438.

¹⁷⁰ *Al-Bayân wa at-Tabyeen*, 2/150.

Allah. If there comes to you a case which is not mentioned in the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah and is not discussed by anyone, then choose whichever of the two options you want." According to another report he said: "If you want to work it out yourself, then go ahead, and if you do not want to, then do not, and I think that not doing so is better for you."¹⁷¹

By studying the letters of 'Umar and the story of his caliphate, the researcher can learn about the salaries that were paid to judges, the kinds of judges who were appointed, their duties and obligations, the sources of their rulings, the fact that the caliph himself submitted to the judges and other matters that have to do with the judiciary.

2.2. Appointment of judges, their salaries and their judicial specialities

2.2.1. Appointment of judges

Judges were appointed directly by the caliph, as when 'Umar appointed Shurayh as the judge of Koofah, or they were appointed by the governor acting on behalf of the caliph, as when 'Amr ibn al-'Âs, the governor of Egypt, appointed 'Uthmân ibn Qays ibn Abi al-'Âs as a judge in Egypt. The right to appoint judges belongs to the caliph; if he wishes he may appoint them himself, or if he wishes he may delegate his governor to do that. The appointment of judges does not prevent the caliph from examining some cases and passing judgement himself, because judicial matters come under his authority and he is the one who delegates the role of judge to others. But he is primarily entitled to pass judgement, and a judge only acquires that

¹⁷¹ *Jâmi' Bayna al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi*, 2/70.

role when he is appointed by the caliph himself or by his governor.¹⁷² It is permissible for the caliph to dismiss a judge for any reason, such as if the judge is not longer qualified and fit to pass judgements, or if it is proven that he has done something that does not befit the position of a judge. If there is no reason to dismiss him then it is better not to do so, because a judge who has been appointed to serve the interests of the Muslims should remain so long as their interests are being served.¹⁷³ 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) dismissed some judges and appointed others, as when he dismissed Abu Maryam al-Ḥanafī¹⁷⁴, in whom he found some weakness.

2.2.2. Judges' salary

'Umar used to advise his governors to choose those who were fit to be judges and to give them sufficient salaries.¹⁷⁵ He wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'ādh saying: "Choose righteous men to appoint as judges and give them salaries."¹⁷⁶

Dr. al-'Umari mentions the salaries of some of the judges at the time of 'Umar, which were as follows: Salmān ibn Rabee'ah al-Bāhili (Koofah), 500 *dirhams* each month; Shurayḥ al-Qāḍi (Koofah), 100 *dirhams* each month; 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood al-Hudhali (Koofah), 100 *dirhams* each month and one quarter of a sheep each day; 'Uthmān ibn Qays ibn Abi al-'Āṣ (Egypt), 200 *dinārs*; Qays ibn Abi al-'Āṣ as-Suhami (Egypt), 200 *dinārs*.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² *An-Nidhām al-Qaḍā'i, Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān*, Pp. 72, 73.

¹⁷³ *Mughni al-Muḥtāj*, 4/382; *an-Nidhām al-Qaḍā'i*, p. 77.

¹⁷⁴ *An-Nidhām al-Qaḍā'i*, p. 77.

¹⁷⁵ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 143.

¹⁷⁶ *An-Nidhām al-Qaḍā'i*, p. 76.

¹⁷⁷ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 159.

2.2.3. Judicial specialities

During the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, judges would pass judgments on all kinds of cases, no matter what type they were, such as financial disputes, family matters, *hudood* punishments and *qisâs*, and any other kind of disputes. There is nothing to indicate that there was anything like what is known nowadays as judicial specialities, apart from the reports that as-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed ibn Ukht Nimr was appointed and was told by 'Umar: "Go and look after the cases that have to do with minor financial disputes."¹⁷⁸

Judges dealt with cases having to do with civil rights and personal matters. As for *hudood* punishments and *qisâs*, these were referred to the caliph and regional governors, who had to approve of the ruling. Approval of carrying out the death penalty was restricted to the caliph alone, but governors had the right to approve of cases of *qisâs* that did not involve the death penalty.

There was no specific place set aside for judicial procedures, rather the judge passed judgements in homes and mosques, but it was more common for such procedures to take place in the mosque.¹⁷⁹ Cases were not recorded because they were so few and were easily remembered. It was possible for a judge to detain the accused as a rebuke and so as to force him to restore people's rights. This was done by 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them). The state set up prisons in the city centres. *Qasâs* punishments were carried out outside the mosques.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ *An-Nidhâm al-Qadâ'i*, p. 74; *'Aşr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 144.

¹⁷⁹ *'Aşr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 145.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

2.3. Qualities of the judge and what was required of him

2.3.1. Qualities of the judge

From the life of 'Umar the scholars have derived the most important qualities of the judge who is to be appointed.

- ❖ Knowledge of the rulings of shari'ah: Because he is going to apply them in the cases he deals with, and it is impossible for him to apply them if he does not know them.
- ❖ Piety (taqwa): 'Umar wrote to Mu'âdh ibn Jabal and Abu 'Unaydah ibn al-Jarrâh telling them, "Look for some righteous men among you and appoint them as judges."¹⁸¹
- ❖ Lack of interest in what people possess: 'Umar (ﷺ) said, "No one can establish the commands of Allah except one who is not trying to appease people or show off, and who has no materialistic ambitions."¹⁸²
- ❖ Intelligence: It is essential that a judge should be smart and intelligent, one who notices subtle matters. It was narrated from ash-Sha'bi that Ka'b ibn Siwâr was sitting with 'Umar when a woman came to him and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I have never seen a man who is better than my husband. By Allah, he spends the night in prayer and he spends his days fasting, and does not break his fast on a hot day." He prayed for forgiveness for her and praised her and said, "You are saying something good about your husband." The woman felt shy, so she left. Ka'b said, "O' *Ameer al-*

¹⁸¹ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 723; *al-Mughni*, 9/37.

¹⁸² *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 2/102.

Mu'mineen, why didn't you help her to solve her problem with her husband?" 'Umar asked, "What was she complaining about?" He said, "She was complaining about a serious problem with her husband." He asked, "Is that so?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Bring the woman back." He said (to her), "There is nothing wrong with speaking the truth. This man claims that you were complaining about your husband and that he avoids your bed." She said, "Yes. I am a young woman and I want what any woman wants." He sent for her husband, who came to him. Then 'Umar said to Ka'b, "Pass judgement between them." He (Ka'b) said, "The caliph is more entitled to pass judgement between them." He said, "I insist that you pass judgement between them, for you understood something about their situation that I did not understand." He said, "I think that if there were three wives and she was the fourth, she would have one night in every four. So I rule that he should keep three days and nights for himself during which he may pray, and she should have one day and night." 'Umar said, "By Allah, your suggestion is more amazing than your understanding her hint. Go, for you are the judge of Başra."¹⁸³

- ❖ Strictness without harshness; kindness without weakness: 'Umar said, "No one should be appointed to this role but a man who has four qualities: kindness without weakness, strictness without harshness, moderation without stinginess and easiness without extravagance."¹⁸⁴
- ❖ Strength of character: 'Umar said, "I am going to dismiss Abu Maryam and appoint a man who when the evildoer sees him he will be scared." So he dismissed him from the post of judge of

¹⁸³ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 723.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 724.

Baṣrah and appointed Ka'b ibn Soor instead.¹⁸⁵

- ❖ He should be wealthy and of a good lineage: 'Umar wrote to some of his governors saying, "No one should be appointed as a judge except one who is well-off and of good lineage. The one who is well-off will have no desire for people's wealth, and the one who is of good lineage will not be scared of people."¹⁸⁶

2.3.2. What is required of the judge

There are some matters which 'Umar stated the judge must pay attention to in order to establish justice. These include:

- ❖ Sincerity towards Allah in one's actions: 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying, "Passing correct judgement brings reward from Allah and will store up reward for you (in the Hereafter). Whoever has a sincere intention to establish the truth, even if it is against himself, Allah will suffice him and protect him from the people. Whoever puts on a pretence that is not in his heart, Allah will shame him. Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, does not accept any deed from people except that which is sincere. Think of the reward of Allah in this world and in the Hereafter."¹⁸⁷
- ❖ Precise understanding of the case: He should study it carefully before passing his ruling. It is not permissible to pass the ruling before the truth of the matter is clear. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying, "Try to understand the case when it is referred to you." On one occasion Abu Moosa said, "A judge should not pass judgement until the truth is as clear to

¹⁸⁵ Op. cit.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een* by Ibn al-Qayyim, 1/85.

him as night and day." News of that reached 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and he said, "Abu Moosa has spoken the truth."¹⁸⁸

- ❖ Ruling according to Islamic shari'ah whether the disputing parties are Muslim or not: It was narrated from Zayd ibn Aslam that a Jewish woman came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said, "My son has died, and the Jews are saying that I have no right to his estate." 'Umar called them and said, "Why don't you give her her rights?" They said, "We cannot find anything in our Book that gives her any rights." 'Umar said, "Is that in the Torah?" They said, "No, in the Mishnah." He asked, "What is the Mishnah?" They said, "A book that was written by scholars and wise men." 'Umar cursed them and said, "Go and give her her rights!"¹⁸⁹
- ❖ Consulting others about any matter of which he is not sure: 'Umar wrote to one of his judges saying, "Consult those who fear Allah with regard to your religion."¹⁹⁰ He wrote to Shurayh saying, "If you want to consult with me (then do so), for I think that your consulting with me is better for you."¹⁹¹ 'Umar used to consult others so much that ash-Sha'bi said, "Whoever would like to have the most reliable judgment, let him adopt the judgement of 'Umar, for he used to consult others."¹⁹²
- ❖ Treating disputants equally: 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying, "Treat people equally when you address them so that no noble man will hope that you will side with him unfairly and no weak man will despair of your justice." He also wrote, "Treat people as equal with regard to the truth, both

¹⁸⁸ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 725.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid; *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/112.

¹⁹¹ Ibid; *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/110.

¹⁹² Ibid; *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/109.

the one whom you know and the one whom you do not know.” When Ubayy ibn Ka'b made a claim against 'Umar with regard to a garden which 'Umar did not know about, they appointed Zayd ibn Thābit to judge between them. They went to him in his house and when they entered, 'Umar said, “We have come to you so that you may judge between us.” Zayd moved to let him sit in the best seat — and according to another report, Zayd brought out a cushion and gave it to him, saying, “Here you are, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*.” 'Umar said, “You have been unfair in your judgement at the outset, O' Zayd. Rather let me sit with my opponent,” and they both sat in front of him.¹⁹³

- ❖ Encouraging the weak: So that he will not be afraid and will dare to speak up. 'Umar wrote to Mu'āwiyah saying, “Be kind to the one who is weak so that he will be encouraged to speak.”¹⁹⁴
- ❖ Dealing quickly with the case of a stranger, or else supporting him until the case is over: 'Umar wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah saying, “Pay extra attention to the stranger, for if he has to stay too long — and be away from his family because of this case — he will forego his rights and return to his family.”¹⁹⁵
- ❖ Patience: 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa saying, “Beware of boredom, anger, anxiety and feeling annoyed with people when passing judgement. If the judge notices any of these things it is not permissible for him to pass judgement until that has gone away, lest his psychological state affect the judgement he passes.”

¹⁹³ *Saḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Ḥayāt al-Fārooq*, p. 259.

¹⁹⁴ *Majmoo'at al-Wathā'iq as-Siyāsiyah*, p. 4380.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "Do not pass judgement when you are angry."¹⁹⁶ And it was narrated that Shurayh said: " 'Umar stipulated when he appointed me as a judge that I should not pass judgement when I was angry."¹⁹⁷ Things that may lead to impatience and sometimes make a judge hasten inappropriately to pass judgement include hunger, thirst and so on. Hence 'Umar said: "The judge should not pass judgement until he has had enough to eat and drink."¹⁹⁸

❖ Avoiding everything that may influence the judge: Such as bribes, or traders being easygoing with him, or his going to the marketplace, or accepting gifts and bribes. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, "Do not buy and sell, make investments or accept bribes with regard to rulings." Shurayh said, 'Umar stipulated when he appointed me as a judge that I should not buy and sell or accept bribes. 'Umar said, "Beware of bribes and of ruling according to your whims and desires."¹⁹⁹

❖ Deciding on the basis of apparent evidence without probing into intentions: 'Umar addressed the people and said, «"We knew you when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was amongst us, and the Revelation would come down and tell us about you. Now we know you from what you say, so whoever appears to us to be good, we will assume that he is good and treat him well. Whoever appears to us to be bad, we will assume that he is bad and hate him accordingly. And what is in your hearts is between you and Allah."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 726.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid* and *al-Mughni*, 9/79.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid* and *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/106.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 727.

²⁰⁰ Bukhari, hadith no. 2641; *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/125, 150.

- ❖ Keenness to reconcile between disputing parties: 'Umar said, "Turn disputants away in the hope that they will reconcile, for settling the matter in court generates grudges between people. If they reach a settlement that is in accordance with the laws of Allah, let the judge approve it, and if their agreement is not in accordance with the rulings of shari'ah, let the judge cancel it." 'Umar said, "It is permissible to make a deal between Muslims, except a deal that permits something that is forbidden or forbids something that is permitted."²⁰¹
- ❖ The judge should be keen to bring about reconciliation especially between disputants in cases where it is not clear who is in the right. 'Umar wrote to Mu'āwiyah saying: "Strive to work out agreements among people when it is not clear who is in the right, or if they are related, for settling issues in court generates grudges."²⁰²
- ❖ Coming back to the truth: If a judge passes a ruling concerning some case, then he changes his view on that issue afterwards after studying it further, he cannot go back and change his ruling. It is also not permissible for a judge after him to overrule the judgement he passed. It was narrated that Sâlim ibn Abi al-Ja'd said, "If 'Ali were to have undone a judgement that had been passed by 'Umar, he would have undone his judgement concerning the people of Najrân. 'Ali had written down the treaty between the people of Najrân and the Prophet (ﷺ), then their numbers increased at the time of 'Umar until he feared for the people concerning them. Then a disagreement arose between them and they came to 'Umar and asked him for

²⁰¹ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 2/769; *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 727.

²⁰² *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/108.

compensation, so he compensated them. Then they regretted it and something happened among them, so they came to him and asked him to let them off, but he refused to do so. When 'Ali became caliph, they came to him and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you interceded for us and wrote a treaty with your right hand.' 'Ali said, 'Woe to you! 'Umar was right in what he did.'²⁰³ 'Umar refused to undo the first judgement that he had passed concerning them, and after 'Umar had died, 'Ali refused to undo the judgement that 'Umar had passed concerning them."²⁰⁴

'Umar changed his opinion concerning many cases, such as the ruling concerning a grandfather when there are brothers (of the deceased, in cases of inheritance), or full brothers sharing one-third of the inheritance with uterine brothers when there is nothing of the estate left for the full brothers. But there is no report that he went back and changed his first judgement, rather he applied his new *ijthad* in subsequent cases, and his old ruling did not prevent him from following the truth when it became apparent to him. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "If you pass a judgement today, then you change your opinion and are guided to the correct view, that should not prevent you from adopting what is true, for truth is eternal and cannot be invalidated by anything. Returning to the truth is better than persisting in falsehood."²⁰⁵

On this basis, 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb issued various rulings concerning the grandfather (in cases of inheritance). He ruled that if a wife dies and leaves behind a husband, mother, two half-brothers through her father and two half-brothers through her mother, then the

²⁰³ *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/120; *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 728.

²⁰⁴ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 728.

²⁰⁵ *I'lâm al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/85.

(full—) brothers through the father and mother and the half brothers through the mother share one-third of the estate. A man said to him: "You did not rule that they share the estate in such and such a year." 'Umar said: "That was the judgement that we passed then, and this is the judgement that we pass now."²⁰⁶

- ❖ The accused is innocent until proven guilty: It was narrated that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Āmir said, "I set out with a caravan and when we came to Dhu al-Marwah, a cloak of mine was stolen, and one of those people was with us. My companions said to him, "O' So and so, give him back his cloak." He said, "I did not take it." I went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and told him about it. He asked, "Who was there?" I told him who they were and I named the one who I thought did it and I said, "I wanted to bring him in chains." 'Umar said, "How could you bring him in chains without any proof?"²⁰⁷
- ❖ If there is a text there is no room for ijtihad: 'Umar said, "Try to understand whatever cases are referred to you where there is no evidence from the Qur'an or Sunnah, then try to make an analogy between the case that is before you and similar cases that are dealt with in Qur'an and Sunnah."²⁰⁸

These are the most important matters to which the judge must adhere.

2.3.3. Judges themselves are subject to the rulings on judges

'Umar was the first one to submit to judges even when he was at the peak of his caliphate. He would express clear admiration if the

²⁰⁶ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/111; *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 729.

²⁰⁷ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 729; *al-Muḥalla*, 11/132.

²⁰⁸ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/85; *Majallah al-Buḥooth al-Ilmiyah*, 7/287.

judge got it right and would sincerely praise the judge, even if the ruling went against him.²⁰⁹ There follow some examples of that.

'Umar wanted to buy a horse from a Bedouin. He rode it to try it out, and the horse became lame. 'Umar said: "Take your horse." The man said, "No." 'Umar said, "Then appoint a judge between me and you." The man said, "Shurayh." So they referred to him for judgement. When he heard what they had to say, he said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, take what you bought, or give back what you took as you took it." 'Umar said, "This is the way to pass judgement," and he sent him as a judge to Koofah.²¹⁰

2.4. Sources of judicial rulings

During the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, judges relied on the same sources as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his judges had relied, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah and *ijtihād*, but some new developments appeared during their era:

The process of *ijtihād* and acting upon it was developed further, which resulted in new procedures, such as consultation, *shoora*, *ijmā'* (consensus), *ra'y* (opinion) and *qiyās* (analogy). There also appeared new sources which did not exist at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), namely legal precedents which had been issued by the *Ṣaḥābah* during the reigns of different caliphs. So the sources of judicial rulings at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs were: the Qur'an, the Sunnah, *ijtihād*, *ijmā'* (consensus), *qiyās* (analogy), and legal precedents. All of that was supported by *shoora* and consultation concerning issues, cases and rulings. There are many texts and

²⁰⁹ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 211.

²¹⁰ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 147; *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 211.

reports which support these sources as mentioned above, some of which we will quote below.²¹¹

1. Ash-Sha'bi narrated that Shurayh said: " 'Umar said to me, 'Judge in accordance with what you know of the Book of Allah; if you do not know of anything in the Book of Allah, then judge according to what you know of the judgements of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If you do not know of anything in the judgements of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), then judge according to what you know from the guided Imams. If you do not know of the judgement of the guided Imams, then try to work it out yourself, and consult knowledgeable and righteous people.' ”²¹²

2. It was narrated from Ibn Shihâb az-Zuhri that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) said, when he was on the *minbar*: "O' people, in the case of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), *ra'y* (personal opinion) was always correct, because Allah guided him. But in our case it is speculation and conjecture."²¹³ And it was narrated that he said: "This is 'Umar's opinion; if it is right, it is from Allah and if it is wrong, it is from 'Umar."²¹⁴

3. Ibn al-Qayyim said: "When 'Umar was appointed as caliph, he said, 'I feel too shy before Allah to reject anything that Abu Bakr said.'²¹⁵ 'Umar also confirmed this in another letter to Shurayh in which he said, 'Judge according to what is in the Book of Allah. If there is nothing in the Book of Allah, then according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). If there is nothing in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), then judge according to the judgements

²¹¹ *Tāreekh al-Qadā' fee al-Islām*, by Dr. Muhammad az-Zuhayli, p. 118.

²¹² *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/224; *Tāreekh al-Qadā' fee al-Islām*, p. 119.

²¹³ *Tāreekh al-Qadā' fee al-Islām*, p. 120; *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/57.

²¹⁴ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/58; *Tāreekh al-Qadā' fee al-Islām*, p. 120.

²¹⁵ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/224.

passed by the righteous.'"²¹⁶

4. *Ijmâ'* (consensus): If the judge could not find any text in the Qur'an or Sunnah, he would refer to the scholars and consult the *Ṣaḥâbah* and *fuqaha'*. He would discuss the matter with them and they would research it and try to work it out. If their efforts reached a single conclusion, then this is consensus (*ijmâ'*), which is the agreement of the *mujtahids* of a single generation of the ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) upon a *shar'i* matter. This is the third source of Islamic legislation according to scholarly consensus. It appeared for the first time during the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Many texts have been narrated concerning it, and there are lengthy discussions of it in the books of fiqh, *uṣool al-fiqh* and the history of legislation. But the cases in which there was consensus are few, and the possibility of consensus existed only in Madeenah, which was the capital of the caliphate and the meeting-place of the *Ṣaḥâbah*, scholars and *fuqaha'*. It was very rare in other cities.²¹⁷

An example of that is the report that Ibn 'Abbâs asked 'Uthmân (may Allah be pleased with them both): "Two brothers (*akhawân*) in the dialect of your people does not mean brothers (*ikhwah*), so why is their mother's share (of inheritance) reduced from one-third to one-sixth on the basis of the verse,

«... If the deceased left brothers or [sisters], the mother has a sixth...»
(*Qur'an* 4: 11)?"

He ('Uthmân) said, "I cannot undo a judgement that was passed before me and has become widespread and people have inherited in accordance with it." What he meant is that the consensus was reached before Ibn 'Abbâs raised this objection, so his objection did not affect that consensus.

²¹⁶ *Târeekh al-Qadâ' fee al-Islâm*, p. 120.

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 122.

Consensus should be based on three main principles: consultation, ijtihād and agreement. If any of these is missing, then the judge should move on to the next source.

5. Legal precedent: i.e., judgements passed by previous caliphs, righteous men and senior *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them). This is what 'Umar described in clear terms with regard to the prior judgements of Abu Bakr, and it is what he enjoined upon his judges and governors, as stated above.²¹⁸ This is also what Ibn al-Qayyim stated clearly under the title, "The opinion of the *Ṣaḥābah* is better than our own opinion." And he said: "Those whose opinions have such a high status should be better for us than our own opinion. How could it be otherwise? Those are opinions which came from hearts that were filled with light, faith, knowledge and understanding of Allah and His Messenger, and with sincerity towards the ummah. They were following in the footsteps of their Prophet with no intermediary between them and him. They transmitted knowledge and faith fresh, direct and unsullied from the Prophetic source, with no confusion or dispute. To think of the opinions of others as being as good as their opinions is a serious mistake."²¹⁹

6. Analogy (*qiyās*): But legal precedents are also very rare. If a judge cannot find a text or consensus, or any legal precedents, then he must rely on ijtihād, as it says in the hadith of Mu'ādh. Analogy is what comes first when striving to work out (ijtihad) an issue concerning which there is no text. This is the fourth source of legislation, fiqh and rulings. This is what is mentioned in the letter of 'Umar to Abu Moosa al-Asha'ri, in which he said: "Then look for similar cases and make an analogy, and see what conclusion is most likely to be acceptable to Allah and is most likely to be correct."²²⁰

²¹⁸ Op. cit., Pp. 122, 123.

²¹⁹ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/87; *Tāreekh al-Qaḍā' fee al-Islām*, p. 123.

²²⁰ *Tāreekh al-Qaḍā' fee al-Islām*, p. 124.

7. Opinion (*ra'y*): If there is no basic text to which an analogy may be made, then the judge must work out his own opinion as to what is closest to the truth, justice and the basic principles and aims of shari'ah. This is what is repeated in the reports quoted above, in the letters of 'Umar to Shurayh and others.²²¹

Consultation and *shoora* were among the most important means which were used by judges, as is narrated in the reports, books and letters mentioned above. This is what 'Umar confirmed in word and deed, because he loved *shoora* so much even though he had a great knowledge of Islam, and he rarely went ahead with anything until after he had consulted the senior *Ṣaḥābah* and *fuqaha*.²²²

It was narrated that ash-Sha'bi said: "Cases would be referred to 'Umar and he would sometimes ponder them for a month, consulting his companions."²²³

2.5. Evidence on which the judge may rely

The evidence on which the judge may rely in passing rulings is:

1. Confession, and writing is regarded as a kind of confession.
2. Testimony: The judge is required to verify that witnesses are qualified to testify. If he does not know them himself, then he should ask them to bring someone who does know them. A man gave testimony to 'Umar and he said to him: "I do not know you, but it does not matter that I do not know you. Bring me someone who does know you." A man among the people said, "I know him." 'Umar asked, "What do you know about him?" He said, "He is of good

²²¹ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/70 ff.

²²² *Tāreekh al-Qadā'*, p. 125.

²²³ *Ibid.*

character and is virtuous." He asked, "Is he your closest neighbour who you know by night and by day, and you know when he comes in and goes out?" He said, "No." He asked, "Did he have any financial dealings with you which is the way to know whether he is God-fearing or not?" He said, "No." He then asked, "Has he been your companion on a journey, which is the way to know whether he is of noble character and attitude?" He said, "No." He ('Umar) said, "Then you do not know him."²²⁴

Testimony takes precedence over an oath whether that the testimony is established before his opponent swears an oath or afterwards. If the plaintiff asks the defendant to swear an oath and the judge makes him do so, then the plaintiff brings proof after that concerning his case, his evidence is to be accepted and the oath is to be rejected. 'Umar said: "A false oath is more deserving of being rejected than clear proof."²²⁵

The one who is to be asked to give testimony is the plaintiff. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa saying: "Proof is to be provided by the plaintiff, and the oath is to be sworn by the one who denies."²²⁶ If the plaintiff has only one witness, his testimony should be accepted and the plaintiff should also swear an oath. 'Umar used to pass judgement in financial cases on the basis of an oath and a single witness.²²⁷

3. Oaths: The judge should not resort to asking the defendant to swear an oath except when the plaintiff is unable to establish proof and asks the defendant to swear an oath. If he swears an oath, then the judge must rule according to that oath. 'Umar and Ubayy ibn Ka'b referred to Zayd ibn Thābit for judgement concerning a garden which

²²⁴ *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/125; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 731.

²²⁵ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 731.

²²⁶ *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/153, 150.

²²⁷ *Al-Mughni*, 9/151; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 732.

Ubayy claimed was his. 'Umar had to swear an oath, and Zayd said: "Let the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* off." 'Umar said, "Why should he let the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* off? If something belonged to me I would be entitled to it by virtue of my oath, otherwise I would not lay claim to it. By the One besides Whom there is no other god, this garden is mine and Ubayy has no right to it." After the case was settled, he gave the garden to Ubayy as a gift. It was said to him, "Why didn't you give it to him before the oath?" He said, "I feared that if I did not swear the oath, the people would not swear oaths for their rights after me, and that would become the norm."²²⁸

It is not permissible for one who has to swear an oath to refuse to do so out of piety. We have seen above how 'Umar swore an oath, then when he won his case he gave up his right.

In some cases 'Umar made the oaths carry greater weight by making disputing parties swear oaths in a place which was deeply venerated and respected by them, so that they would not dare to tell lies in such a place. He made a group from Murrah swear an oath in the Hġjr, and he made another group swear an oath between the *Rukn* and the *Maqâm*.²²⁹

4. Detecting family likenesses in cases determining lineage: This is one of the kinds of strong circumstantial evidence that may form the basis of a ruling. This is indicated by the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the actions of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the *Ṣaḥābah*. Use of such evidence in rulings was approved of by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn 'Abbās and others.²³⁰

²²⁸ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah*, 2/755; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 732.

²²⁹ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 733.

²³⁰ *An-Nidhām al-Qadā'i* by Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, Pp. 81, 82.

5. Circumstantial evidence: Circumstantial evidence covers a broad category which judges use their intelligence to derive. Examples of strong circumstantial evidence include a woman's pregnancy when she has never been married; this is regarded as evidence of *zinā*. Another example is giving birth before the usual length of pregnancy is over. Yet another example is the presence of two dead persons, one of top of the other. This situation provides strong circumstantial evidence that the one who died first is the one on the bottom, and the one who died last is the one on top. Hence during the plague of 'Amwās, when the hand or foot of one dead person was on top of another, 'Umar ruled that the one on top was the heir of the one on the bottom, and that the one on the bottom could not be the heir of the one on top.

An example of circumstantial evidence in the case of drinking alcohol is the presence of wine in a person's vomit. 'Umar carried out the *ḥadd* punishment for drinking on a person in whose vomit wine was found.²³¹

6. Prior knowledge on the part of the judge: Prior knowledge of the judge with regard to *ḥadd* punishments is not regarded as evidence which entitles him to issue a judgement against the accused. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari telling him that an Imam should not rule on the basis of his knowledge, speculation or suspicion.²³²

He asked 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf: "What do you think if I saw a man kill, steal or commit *zinā*?" He said, "I think that your testimony is like that of any other Muslim man." 'Umar said, "You are right."²³³

²³¹ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 735.

²³² *Ibid* and *Muṣannaf 'Abdur-Razzāq*, 8/342.

²³³ *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 10/144; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, 735.

With regard to *ḥudood* punishments, there are various reports from 'Umar regarding the prior knowledge of the judge and whether that is sufficient knowledge for the judge to pass judgement on that basis if there is no other evidence available.²³⁴ However 'Umar was keen not to encourage the people to confess their sins, rather he wanted them to repent and to keep the matter between them and Allah. Shuraḥbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi, who was guarding the border near al-Madâ'in, addressed the people and said: "O' people, you are in a land where drinking is widespread and there are many women. If any one of you commits a crime that deserves a *ḥadd* punishment, let him come to us so that we may carry out the punishment on him, for that will be his purification." News of that reached 'Umar and he wrote to him saying: "It is not permissible for you to tell the people to remove the concealment of Allah Who has concealed them."²³⁵

But if the people referred the matter for judgement, then it was the state that carried out *ḥadd* punishments without any lenience.²³⁶

When 'Umar wanted to pass a judgement between two disputants, he would recite the following *du'â*: "O' Allah, if You know when two disputants sit before me that I am worried in the slightest about who is at fault, then do not withhold the punishment from me for an instant."²³⁷

²³⁴ Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar, p. 735.

²³⁵ *Al-Qaḍâ' fee Khilâfat 'Umar*, by Nâsir aṭ-Ṭurayfi, 2/862.

²³⁶ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 146.

²³⁷ *Al-Hilyah*, 6/140; *aṭ-Tabaqât*, 3/290, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

2.6. Rulings and punishments meted out by 'Umar for some crimes and misdemeanours

2.6.1. Forging of the official seal of the state

During 'Umar's caliphate a serious event took place which had not taken place before. Ma'n ibn Zâ'idah managed to forge the seal of the state by engraving something similar, which he used to take money from the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims. The case was referred to 'Umar, who had him beaten one hundred times and imprisoned. Someone tried to intercede on his behalf, and he had him beaten another hundred times. Someone else tried to intercede on his behalf and he had him beaten a further hundred times and banished.²³⁸

2.6.2. A man who stole from the *bayt al-mâl* in Koofah

'Umar did not cut off the hand of one who stole from the *bayt al-mâl*. Ibn Mas'ood asked 'Umar about a man who stole from the *bayt al-mâl* and he said: "Let him go, for there is no one who does not have a right to this wealth."²³⁹ But he had him whipped as a *ta'zeer* punishment.²⁴⁰

2.6.3. Theft during the year of ar-Ramâdah

During the year of ar-Ramâdah, the slaves of Ḥaṭīb ibn Abi Balta'ah stole a camel belonging to a Muzani man, which they slaughtered and ate. The matter was referred to 'Umar, who went after the slaves, and they admitted that they had stolen it from its proper place, and that those who had stolen it were adults of sound

²³⁸ *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 453.

²³⁹ *Al-Mughni*, 12/386; in *al-Irwa'*, 2422, its isnad is *ḍa'eef*.

²⁴⁰ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 148.

mind; they made no claim of necessity that compelled them to steal. 'Umar ordered Katheer ibn aṣ-Ṣalt to cut off their hands but — because he was living through the year of ar-Ramâdah and he saw what the people were going through — he looked for an excuse for them. He said to their master: "I think that you are starving them." That was all he did in this case. He waived the punishment of amputation and he ordered that the Muzani man be given a camel of twice the value²⁴¹ (800 *dirhams*). Thus they were protected from the *hadd* punishment because of necessity.²⁴²

2.6.4. An insane woman who committed *zinâ*

An insane woman who had committed *zinâ* was brought to 'Umar. He consulted the people then he commanded that she be stoned. 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib passed by and said: "Take her back!" Then he came to 'Umar and said, "Do you not know that the Pen has been lifted...?" and he quoted the hadith. At the end of it he said, "Yes." 'Ali said, "Then why should she be stoned? Let her go."²⁴³ And 'Umar started to say *takbeer*.²⁴⁴

2.6.5. A *dhimmi* who forced a Muslim woman to commit *zinâ*

That happened during the caliphate of 'Umar and he crucified him, because he had gone against the conditions of the treaty.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ *Al-Muntaqa Sharḥ al-Muwatta'* by al-Bâji, 6/63.

²⁴² *Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 148.

²⁴³ *Al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah* by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 351; *Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 148.

²⁴⁴ *Aṣr al-Khilâfah*, p. 148.

²⁴⁵ *Al-Muwatta'*, 2/827; *al-Mughni*, 12/217; Bukhari, hadith no. 2548.

2.6.6. Forcing women to commit *zinâ*

Some slave women who had been forced by some slave men to commit *zinâ* were brought to 'Umar. He beat the men but he did not beat the women.²⁴⁶

A woman who had committed *zinâ* was brought to 'Umar and she said: "I was sleeping and when I woke up there was a man on top of me." He let her go and did not beat her.²⁴⁷

In these cases where there was some uncertainty, the *ḥadd* punishments were waived. No distinction was made between physical force and threats to kill. During 'Umar's caliphate, a woman asked a shepherd for water, but he refused to give it to her unless she let him have his way with her. She did that, and the matter was referred to 'Umar. He asked 'Ali: "What do you think about her?" He said, "She was forced." So 'Umar gave her something and let her go.

2.6.7. Ruling on one who was ignorant of the prohibition on *zinâ*

It was narrated from Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib that an agent of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to 'Umar telling him that a man had admitted to him that he had committed *zinâ*. 'Umar wrote to him, telling him: "Ask him whether he knew that it was *ḥarâm* (unlawful, prohibited). If he says yes, then carry out the *ḥadd* punishment on him. If he says no, then tell him that it is *ḥarâm* and if he does it again, then punish him."²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ *As-Sunan al-Kubra* by al-Bayhaqi, 8/35; *al-Mughni*, 12/217.

²⁴⁷ *As-Sunan al-Kubra*, 8/236; *al-Mughni*, 12/218.

²⁴⁸ *Al-Muḥalla*, 12/107, no. 2198.

2.6.8. She got married during her *'iddah* but she and her husband did not know that it is *ḥarâm*

A woman got married during her *'iddah*, and the matter was referred to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. He beat her but did not carry out the *ḥadd* punishment on her, separated them²⁴⁹, and whipped the husband as a *ḥadd* punishment.²⁵⁰

2.6.9. A woman got married and she already had a husband but she concealed the fact

'Umar stoned her and gave the husband one hundred lashes, but he did not stone him because he had been unaware of the situation.²⁵¹

2.6.10. When al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah was accused of *zinâ*

Three men testified against him, but the fourth retracted. 'Umar said: "Praise be to Allah who did not give the *Shayṭân* any cause to rejoice over the Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ)."²⁵² He carried out the *ḥadd* punishment for slander on the three men, because the testimony is not complete if it is given only by three.²⁵³

2.6.11. Ruling on a woman who had intercourse with her slave

A woman allowed her slave to have his way with her, and when she was told off, she said: "Doesn't Allah say, [those [slaves]

²⁴⁹ *Al-Muḥalla*, 12/192, no. 2215.

²⁵⁰ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 149.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Al-Mughni*, 12/245.

²⁵³ *ʿAṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 149.

whom your right hands possess? And this is one whom my right hand possesses." The matter was referred to 'Umar and he said to her: "The one whom your right hand possesses is not permissible for you."²⁵⁴ According to another report, he separated them and gave her one hundred lashes as a *ta'zeer* punishment not as a *ḥadd* punishment. 'Umar waived the *ḥadd* punishment in her case because she was ignorant of the prohibition.²⁵⁵

2.6.12. A woman who accused her husband of having intercourse with her slave woman

A woman accused her husband of having intercourse with her slave woman, then she admitted that she had given her to him. 'Umar ruled that the *ḥadd* punishment for slander should be carried out against her, and she was given eighty lashes.²⁵⁶

2.6.13. *Ḥadd* punishment for slander in a case of insinuation

During the caliphate of 'Umar, there was a case where one person made insinuating remarks to another, and said to him: "My father was not an adulterer and my mother was not an adulteress" (implying that that other person's parents were such). Others said, "He could have praised his father and mother in a different manner. We think that he should be given the *ḥadd* punishment." So 'Umar gave him eighty lashes.²⁵⁷ 'Umar gave the *ḥadd* punishment for this insinuated slander because the hint was very clear. The man was insinuating something about his opponent, so the situation was clear,

²⁵⁴ *Al-Muḥalla*, 12/194, no. 2216.

²⁵⁵ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 203.

²⁵⁶ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 150.

²⁵⁷ *As-Sunan al-Kubra* by al-Bayhaqi, 8/252.

and he only said that after they had argued and traded insults. What 'Umar (ﷺ) did is regarded as a means by which he wanted to discipline the foolish and protect the honour of the innocent. This is a wise policy which does not go against any text of the Qur'an and Sunnah, rather it is in accordance with the spirit of shari'ah.²⁵⁸

2.6.14. Regarding as insignificant the blood of a Jew who impugned the honour of others

At the time of 'Umar, there were two young righteous men who were as close as brothers. One of them went out to join the jihad, and he asked his brother to look after his family. One night he went to check on his brother's family and he saw a lamp burning in the house, and there was a Jew in the house with his brother's wife, reciting lines of provocative verse.

The young man went back to his own house and fetched a sword, then he entered his brother's wife and killed the Jew, whom he then stripped and threw into the street. The next morning they found the body and no one knew who had killed him. They went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and told him about that. 'Umar called out to the people: "*aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)." The people gathered, then 'Umar ascended the *minbar*; he praised and glorified Allah, then he said, "I adjure by Allah any man who knows anything about this body to tell me about it." The young man stood up and told 'Umar about what had happened. 'Umar said, "May Allah protect your hands," and he regarded it as legitimate to have shed his blood.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq*, Pp. 439, 440.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 414.

2.6.15. No *diyyah* is to be paid for one who was killed by Allah

'Abdur-Razzāq narrated in his *Muṣannaḥ*, and al-Bayhaqī narrated in his *Sunan*, that a man hosted some people from Hudhayl. They sent a slave woman to fetch some firewood, and the host was attracted to her, so he followed her and wanted to have his way with her, but she refused. He wrestled with her for a while, then she escaped from him and threw a rock at him and killed him. Then she came to her masters and told them what had happened. Her masters went to 'Umar and told him, and 'Umar sent investigators who found their tracks. 'Umar said: "No *diyyah* is to be paid for one who was killed by Allah." He regarded it as legitimate to have shed the blood of that aggressor, so there was to be no *qiṣās* or *diyyah*, and no expiation was to be offered.

2.6.16. If all the people of Ṣan'ā' were to take part in a murder, he would execute all of them

It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that a boy was murdered and 'Umar said: "If all the people of Ṣan'ā' (Sana) had taken part in that, I would execute them." According to another report, four men killed a boy and 'Umar said: "If all the people of Ṣan'ā' had taken part in that, I would execute them."²⁶⁰ There is no text on this ruling in the Qur'an and Sunnah, and there is no report that Abu Bakr passed any such ruling, rather 'Umar based his ruling on his understanding of the aims of shari'ah and the ruling aimed at preserving the security and stability of society. Bloodshed is no insignificant matter, hence justice, the interests of the ummah and the aims of shari'ah dictate that retaliation (*qiṣās*) should be carried out if

²⁶⁰ Bukhari, *Kitāb ad-Diyāt*, hadith no. 6896.

it is proven that they all took part in the killing. This is the view of the majority of scholars, including the four Imams, Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, al-Ḥasan, Abu Salamah, 'Aṭa', Qatādah, ath-Thawri, al-Awzā'i and others.²⁶¹ This opinion is more correct and is more deserving of being followed, because of the strength of the evidence, namely 'Umar's action and the consensus of the *Ṣaḥābah*, and because it serves as a deterrent and protects lives in society.²⁶²

2.6.17. The punishment of the witch is execution

'Umar wrote to his governors and agents telling them to kill every witch (practitioner of witchcraft), male or female.²⁶³ That was carried out, and there was consensus among the *Ṣaḥābah* on that point.²⁶⁴

2.6.18. One who kills his child deliberately; ruling on a Muslim who kills a *dhimmi*

'Umar ruled that a man who killed his child deliberately had to pay the *diyyah*.²⁶⁵ As for a Muslim who kills a *dhimmi*, the ruling is that he should be executed in retaliation (*qiṣās*). This happened during 'Umar's caliphate, when a Muslim killed a *dhimmi* in Syria, and was executed in retaliation.²⁶⁶

²⁶¹ *Al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudāmah, 11/387.

²⁶² See: *Awwaliyāt al-Fâroq as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 409.

²⁶³ *Awwaliyāt al-Fâroq as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 447.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ *ʿAsr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 153; *al-Mughni*, 11/405.

²⁶⁶ *ʿAsr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 153.

2.6.19. Reconciling between *diyāh* and *qasāmāh*

Qasāmāh is a oath repeatedly sworn either by the heirs of the victim or by the defendant.²⁶⁷ 'Abdur-Razzāq, Ibn Abi Shaybah and al-Bayhaqi narrated from ash-Sha'bi that a dead body was found between Wādi'ah and Shâkir.²⁶⁸ 'Umar commanded them to measure the distance between them, and they found that the body was closer to Wādi'ah, so he made each man among them swear fifty times: "I did not kill him and I do not know who killed him." Then he imposed the *diyāh* on them. They said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, our oaths did not protect our wealth and our wealth did not protect our oaths." 'Umar said, "That's how it should be done."²⁶⁹

2.6.20. "O' Allah, I was not there, I did not issue instructions, I did not approve and I was not pleased when the news reached me"

When news of the conquest of Tastar reached 'Umar, he said: "Were there any problems?" They said, "Yes. A man apostatized from Islam." He asked, "What did you do with him?" They said, "We executed him." He said, "Why didn't you lock him in a room and feed him a loaf of bread each day and ask him to repent; if he had repented, all well and good, otherwise you could have executed him." Then he said, "O' Allah, I was not there, I did not issue instructions, I did not approve and I was not pleased when the news reached me."²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ *Awâliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 264.

²⁶⁸ *Awâliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 266; these are two tribes in Yemen.

²⁶⁹ *As-Sunan al-Kubra* by al-Bayhaqi, 8/123-124; *Awâliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 466.

²⁷⁰ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/373.

2.6.21. Making the *ḥadd* punishment for drinking alcohol eighty lashes

When 'Umar became caliph and the Islamic conquests became widespread, people's situation improved and the Muslims spread out. Many people entered Islam but they did not receive a sufficient Islamic education and learn to understand the religion properly like those who had come before them. So wine-drinking became widespread among the people and this was a problem that 'Umar faced. He gathered the senior *Ṣaḥābah* together and consulted them about the matter. They agreed to bring the *ḥadd* punishment up to eighty lashes, and this was the least severe of the *ḥadd* punishments. He acted upon that and none of the *Ṣaḥābah* went against that during his reign.²⁷¹ Ibn al-Qayyim stated that Khâlid ibn al-Waleed sent Wabarah aṣ-Ṣaleeti from Syria to 'Umar. He said: "I came to him and Talḥah, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm and 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf were with him, reclining in the mosque. I asked him, 'Khâlid ibn al-Waleed sends *salâms* to you and says that the people are indulging in wine and are not worrying about the punishment; what do you think?' 'Umar said, 'Here they are (the people who can give you an answer).' 'Ali said, 'I think that when a person gets drunk, he does not know what he is saying, and if he does not know what he is saying, he will tell lies, and the liar deserves eighty lashes.' They agreed on that, so 'Umar said, 'Tell your companion what they said.' So Khâlid gave eighty lashes, and 'Umar gave eighty lashes."²⁷²

2.6.22. Burning taverns where wine was served

It was narrated from Yahya ibn Sa'eed, from 'Ubaydullâh from Nâfi' that Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: " 'Umar found some drink in the

²⁷¹ *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'een*, 1/211.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

house of a man of Thaqeef, and he ordered that it be burned. The man was called Ruwayshid ('wise') and 'Umar said: "You are *fuwaysiq* ('evildoer')." ²⁷³

Ibn al-Jawzi said: "Burned" means that 'Umar burned the house of Ruwayshid ath-Thaqafi; it was a tavern (where wine was served). Ibn al-Qayyim said: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb burned taverns with everything in them, and he burned a village where wine was sold. ²⁷⁴

2.6.23. Marry her off as a chaste Muslim woman

A man came to 'Umar and said: "I have a daughter whom I buried alive during the *Jāhiliyah*, then we dug her up before she died. She came to know of Islam and became Muslim, then she did something that deserves one of the *ḥadd* punishments of Allah. She took a knife to kill herself, but we caught her when she had cut some of her veins. We looked after her until she recovered, then she repented sincerely and now some people are proposing marriage to her. Should I tell them what happened?" 'Umar (ﷺ) said, "Would you deliberately disclose that which Allah has concealed? By Allah, if you tell anyone about her situation, I will make an example of you to the people of all regions. Marry her off as a chaste Muslim woman." ²⁷⁵

2.6.24. If a man divorces his wife in order to deprive her of the inheritance

It was narrated from Sālim, from his father, that Ghaylān ath-Thaqafi become Muslim and he had ten wives at that time. The

²⁷³ *Al-Amwāl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 125, no. 267; *Awwaliyāt al-Fārooq*, p. 435.

²⁷⁴ *Aṭ-Ṭuruq al-Ḥakeemah*, Pp. 15, 16.

²⁷⁵ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/709; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* as far as ash-Sha'bi, but it is interrupted between ash-Sha'bi and 'Umar.

Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Choose four." When 'Umar was the caliph, Ghaylân divorced his wives and divided his wealth among his sons. News of that reached 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, who sent for him. When he came to him, 'Umar said to him: "I think that the *Shaytân* may have heard something about your death and has informed you that you are going to die, and that is why you did what you did. By Allah, I believe that soon after you leave me, you are going to die. By Allah, if you die before you take back your wives and take back your wealth, I will give your wives a share of your wealth, then I will stone your grave and make it like the grave of Abu Raghghâl." So he took back his wives — as he had not divorced them irrevocably — and he took back the wealth that he had divided among his sons, and soon after that, he died.²⁷⁶

2.6.25. Minimum and maximum length of pregnancy

A woman was brought to 'Umar whose pregnancy had lasted six months, and 'Umar wanted to stone her, but her sister came to 'Ali and said: "Umar wants to stone my sister; I adjure you by Allah, if you know of any way out for her, tell me about it." 'Ali said, "There is a way out for her." She said *takbeer* so loudly that 'Umar and those who were with him heard it. She went to 'Umar and said, "Ali says that there is a way out for my sister." 'Umar sent word to 'Ali, asking, "What is the way out?" 'Ali said, "Allah (ﷻ) says,

﴿The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years...﴾

(*Qur'an* 2: 233)

And He also says,

﴿... And the bearing of him, and the weaning of him is thirty months...﴾

(*Qur'an* 46: 15)

²⁷⁶ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 47.

So pregnancy is six months and weaning is twenty-four months." So 'Umar let her go.

And a child may remain in his mother's womb for more than nine months. A woman was brought to 'Umar whose husband had been away for two years, then he came back and found her pregnant. 'Umar wanted to stone her, but Mu'ādh ibn Jabal said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, even if you have a case against her, you do not have a case against the one who is in her womb." So 'Umar left her until she had given birth to a boy whose teeth were already present, and her husband realized that the child looked like him. 'Umar said, "Women can no longer give birth to sons like Mu'ādh. Were it not for Mu'ādh, 'Umar could have made a fatal mistake."²⁷⁷

It seems that 'Umar thought that the maximum length of pregnancy was four years, because he ruled that the wife of one who was missing should wait for four years, then she should observe the *'iddah* of a woman whose husband has died. Ibn Qudāmah said, "Quoting 'Umar's view on that, that the one whose husband is missing should wait for four years, the maximum length of pregnancy, then she should observe the *'iddah* of one whose husband has died, four months and ten days, after which it becomes permissible for her to marry."²⁷⁸

2.7. Restrictions on personal possessions so that they will not be abused

Another example of 'Umar's *ijtihād* in which he was ahead of his time and which indicates that the public interest takes precedence over private interests and that restrictions should be placed on

²⁷⁷ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 371.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

personal possessions so that they will not be abused, is narrated by Mâlik in *al-Muwatta'*:

It was narrated from 'Amr ibn Yahya al-Mâzini, from his father, that aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk ibn Khaleefah wanted to dig a ditch that would bring water from al-'Areed, and he wanted to bring it through the land of Muhammad ibn Maslamah, but Muhammad refused. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said to him, "Why are you preventing me when it will benefit you too? You will drink from it first and last and it will not do you any harm." But Muhammad refused. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk spoke to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb about that. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb summoned Muhammad ibn Maslamah and told him to let aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk dig the ditch, but Muhammad said no. 'Umar said, "Why won't you let your brother do something that will benefit him and will also benefit you, for you will take water from it first and last and it will not do you any harm." Muhammad said, "No, by Allah." 'Umar said, "By Allah, he is going to bring it even if that is over your belly." 'Umar ordered him to bring the water, and aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk did that.²⁷⁹

Here 'Umar was drawing an analogy with the hadith of Abu Hurayrah, according to which the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «"No one of you should prevent his neighbour from fixing a piece of wood to his wall."»

The case in which 'Umar passed this ruling was clearer, because the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade a neighbour to prevent his neighbour from fixing a piece of wood to his wall; even though such an action will not harm a neighbour, it will not benefit him either, whereas bringing water does two things: it benefits the neighbour and it does not harm him. So this case is clearer. Aḥmad and Ibrâheem thought that 'Umar ruled in this case by what is known nowadays as

²⁷⁹ See *al-Muwatta'*, *Kitâb Is 'âf al-Mabî'a' bi Rijâl al-Muwatta'*, Pp. 638-639; *al-Muwatta'*, 2/746.

the basic principles of justice.²⁸⁰

'Abdus-Salām as-Sulaymāni thought that it comes under the heading of what is known nowadays in western law as abusing one's rights. This is a definition that the Muslims reached several centuries before the west, and that was based on the hadith of Abu Hurayrah which is quoted above, which 'Umar applied to every case where what a neighbour needs is something that will also benefit the house and land of his neighbour. Others were of the view that it is not permissible to do that except with the neighbour's permission.²⁸¹

From this incident we may note the following points:

1. That this incident comes under the heading of judgements based on 'Umar's ijtihad, because he passed judgement based on aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk's complaint which he brought to 'Umar after Muhammad ibn Maslamah refused to respond to a request that had been presented to him in a friendly manner, after which he was summoned to come to 'Umar.
2. 'Umar's ruling in this case was not haphazard, rather he investigated the matter and examined the circumstances, and made sure that the opponent was indeed refusing to allow the water to pass through his land, which was an attitude for which there was no justification, because allowing the water to pass would not cause any harm to the defendant; on the contrary he would benefit greatly from it and the interests of both parties would be served. As this was the case, his refusal formed a barrier to the common interest and came under the category of abusing one's rights. 'Umar did not take the matter of achieving the common interest for all members of the ummah lightly.

²⁸⁰ *Ilm Uṣool al-Fiqh wa Tāreekh at-Tashree'*, p. 39.

²⁸¹ *Al-Ijtihād fee al-Fiqh al-Islāmi*, Pp. 140, 141.

3. 'Umar spoke kindly to Muhammad ibn Maslamah, reminding him of Islamic brotherhood, in an attempt to convince him to change his mind. When this kindness was met with a blunt refusal accompanied by an oath, an attitude which implied a challenge to the authority of the caliph and a refusal to submit to his rule, 'Umar's response was tough and came at the right level, as befitted his responsibility to protect the authority of the caliphate which he was only using to achieve the interests of all Muslims and protect their rights.²⁸²

2.8. Allowing a threefold divorce with one utterance

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbâs said: «“At the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, and for the first two years of 'Umar's caliphate, the pronouncement of three divorces in one was regarded as one. Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb said, 'The people are being hasty with regard to something in which they should take their time. It would be better for us to let it stand (i.e., to let it count as three divorces),' so he let it stand.”»²⁸³ It was narrated that «Abu aṣ-Ṣahba' asked Ibn 'Abbâs: “Do you know that three divorces at once used to be counted as one during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr and for three years of 'Umar's reign?” Ibn 'Abbâs said, “Yes.”»²⁸⁴

According to these two reports, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb ruled that that counted as a threefold divorce, unlike the practice at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the time of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, when three divorces uttered in one go counted as a single divorce.

²⁸² *Al-Ijtihâd fee al-Fiqh al-Islâmi*, Pp. 141, 142.

²⁸³ Muslim, *Kitâb at-Ṭalâq*, hadith no. 1472.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

'Umar justified this punishment by noting that the practice of uttering a three-fold divorce in one go was on the rise, and he wanted to bring the people back to the form of divorce that is outlined in the Sunnah, which is prescribed by Allah, which is that the man should pronounce one divorce, then leave her (the wife) until she has completed her 'iddah; then if he wants to take her back as his wife, he may do so before the 'iddah ends, and so on, until the three divorces (*talâq*) have been completed.²⁸⁵

Some people regarded this action of 'Umar's as running contrary to the texts, such as Dr. 'Aṭiyah Muṣṭafā Mushrifah, who said: "Umar had the audacity to follow his opinion even if that went against some of the texts and principles that were known and had previously been followed, so that the new ruling would be more suited to the new Muslim society."²⁸⁶ One example that is given is letting the threefold divorce uttered in one go count as three divorces.²⁸⁷ The truth of the matter is that by doing this, 'Umar did not go against the definitive texts, rather he was striving to understand the texts, because there are some reports which support his view.

1. Mâlik narrated from Ashhab from al-Qâsim ibn 'Abdullâh that Yahya ibn Sa'eed told him that Ibn Shihâb told him, that Ibn al-Musayyib told him, that: "A man from Aslam divorced his wife at the time of the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) with three divorces. Some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (Companions of the Prophet) said to him, 'You have the right to take her back.' But his wife went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said, 'My husband divorced me with three divorces in one go.' The Messenger of Allah

²⁸⁵ *Al-Qadâ' fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Dr. Nâsir at-Ṭareefi, 2/733.

²⁸⁶ *Al-Qadâ' fee al-Islâm*, p. 98.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 99

(ﷺ) said to her, 'You are irrevocably divorced, and there is no inheritance between you.'"²⁸⁸ In this hadith we see that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) allowed a threefold divorce uttered in one go to stand.

2. Nasâ'i narrated that: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was told about a man who divorced his wife three times all in one go. He got up angrily and said, "Is the Book of Allah being toyed with when I am still among you?" Then a man stood up and said, "O' Messenger of Allah, shall I kill him?"»²⁸⁹ In this hadith we see that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) got angry with one who divorced his wife three times in one sitting, and denounced him, which indicates that this happened. If the threefold divorce had not taken place in one sitting, the Messenger of Allah would have said so, because it is not permissible to delay giving an explanation at the time when it is needed.²⁹⁰

3. It was narrated from Nâfi' ibn 'Umayr ibn 'Abd Yazeed ibn Rakânah, that: «Rakânah ibn 'Abd Yazeed divorced his wife Suhaymah irrevocably. The Prophet (ﷺ) was told about that and he said, "By Allah, I only intended it to be one (divorce)." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "By Allah, you only intended it to be one?" Rakânah said, "By Allah, I only intended it to be one." So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent her back to him.» He divorced her for the second time during 'Umar's reign, and for the third time during 'Uthmân's reign.²⁹¹ According to this hadith, when Rakânah

²⁸⁸ *Al-Mudawanah al-Kubra, Kitâb at-Ṭalâq, Bâb Ṭalâq as-Sunnah, 2/62.* It is *mursal*, but the *mursal* reports of Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib are all *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²⁸⁹ *Sunan an-Nasâ'i, Kitâb at-Ṭalâq, at-Ṭalâq ath-Thalâth al-Majmoo'ah, 6/142.* Ibn Hajar said concerning this hadith: It was narrated by Nasâ'i and its men are *thiqât*. *Fath al-Bâri, 9/362.* Ibn al-Qayyim said: Its isnad is in accordance with the conditions of Muslim. *Zâd al-Ma'âd, 5/241.*

²⁹⁰ *Al-Qaḍâ' fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, 2/736.*

²⁹¹ *Sunan Abi Dawood, Kitâb at-Ṭalâq, Bâb fee al-Battah, 1/511.* Abu Dawood=

divorced his wife irrevocably and claimed that he only meant one divorce, the Messenger (ﷺ) asked him to swear that he only meant one divorce, so he swore that and the Prophet (ﷺ) sent his wife back to him. This indicates that if he had intended to irrevocable three-times divorce, it would have taken effect, otherwise his oath would have had no meaning.

After quoting the above, we see that the caliph 'Umar based his decision on evidence from the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and that by allowing a divorce that was uttered three times in one go to count as a threefold divorce, he was not introducing an innovation that he had made up. Many of the *Ṣahâbah* agreed with his opinion, such as 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Alî ibn Abî Tâlib, 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abbâs and 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood — who are mentioned in more than one report — and 'Imrân ibn Ḥuṣayn. Based on this, the issue of whether the threefold divorce uttered in one go counts as such, or whether it counts when a man says words such as "You are thrice divorced," "You are divorced and divorced and divorced," or "You are divorced three times, or ten times, or a hundred times, or a thousand times" and so on, is a matter that is subject to the *ijtihād* of the ruler, according to whether he thinks it is best at that time and in that place for it to count as a threefold divorce or as a single, revocable, divorce.²⁹²

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

=said: This is more *ṣaḥeeḥ* than the hadith of Jurayj which says that Rakânah divorced his wife three times, because they were members of his family and he knew them better. An-Nawawî said: As for the differing report which says that Rakânah divorced his wife three times and made it one, it is a *ḍa'eef* report which is narrated from unknown (*majhool*) people. The correct report is that which is quoted above, which says that he divorced her irrevocably (*al-battah*), and the word *al-battah* may mean once or thrice. *Sharḥ an-Nawawî*, 10/71.

²⁹² *Al-Fuqaha' fee 'Aḥd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, 2/736-739.

“ ‘Umar was not dissenting from the consensus of those who had come before him, rather he thought that they should be forced to adhere to the threefold divorce as a punishment to them, because they knew that it was *ḥarâm* but they persisted in doing it. Undoubtedly it is acceptable for rulers to force people to go through with what they have brought upon themselves by not accepting the concession granted by Allah.²⁹³

2.9. Prohibition of *mut'ah* marriage (Temporary marriage)

It is reported that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) forbade *mut'ah* marriage and was emphatic in doing so; he regarded it as *zinâ* which was punishable by stoning in the case of one who was previously-married. Some people think that the one who forbade *mut'ah* was ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, not the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It was narrated that Abu Naḍrah said: “Ibn ‘Abbâs used to enjoin *mut'ah*, and Ibn az-Zubayr used to forbid it.” He said, “I mentioned that to Jâbir ibn ‘Abdullâh and he said, ‘I know about this issue. We engaged in *mut'ah* at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), then when ‘Umar became caliph he said, ‘Allah used to permit whatever He wanted to His Messenger as He willed. Now the Qur’an has been revealed and completed, so complete Ḥajj and ‘Umrah as Allah has commanded you, and formalize your marriage with those women (with whom you entered into temporary marriages), for if any man who has married a woman for a certain period is brought to me, I will stone him’.”²⁹⁴

This report implies that *mut'ah* was practised at the time of the

²⁹³ *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 5/270.

²⁹⁴ Muslim, *Kitâb al-Ḥajj*, hadith no. 1217.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and that the one who forbade it was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The reports which imply that *mut'ah* was permitted at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he did not forbid it, and that it was also permitted at the time of Abu Bakr, and that the one who forbade *mut'ah* after it had been permitted was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, were mentioned in Muslim and in the *Muṣannaḥ* of 'Abdur-Razzāq. But in fact the one who forbade *mut'ah* was the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Those *Ṣaḥābah* who are described as regarding *mut'ah* as permissible had not heard of the definitive prohibition by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Similarly those later scholars who attributed the prohibition of *mut'ah* to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb without any evidence to that effect, such as Abu Hilāl al-'Askari²⁹⁵ and Rafeeq al-'Adhm²⁹⁶, were unaware of the evidence concerning that from the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which was the basis on which 'Umar forbade *mut'ah*.

There follow some *aḥādeeth* which were narrated from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), from which we understand that he forbade *mut'ah*:

1. Muslim narrated that Salamah said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) granted a concession during the year of Awtās allowing *mut'ah* for three (days), then he forbade it.”»²⁹⁷
2. Muslim narrated that Sabrah said: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave us permission to engage in *mut'ah*, so another man and I went to a woman from Banu 'Āmir, who was young and beautiful, and proposed *mut'ah* marriage to her. She asked, “What will you give

²⁹⁵ *Al-Awā'il*, 1/238-239.

²⁹⁶ *Ashḥar Madhāhir al-Islam*, 2/432; *al-Qaḍā' fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, 2/756.

²⁹⁷ Muslim, *Kitāb an-Nikāh*, *Bāb al-Mut'ah*. It was permitted then abrogated, then permitted then abrogated, and the prohibition remains in effect until the Day of Resurrection (vol. 2, hadith no. 1033).

me?" I said, "My cloak." My companion also said, "My cloak." My companion's cloak was finer than mine, but I was younger than him. When she looked at my companion's cloak, she liked it, but when she looked at me, she liked me. Then she said, "You and your cloak are sufficient for me." I stayed with her for three (days), then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever has any of these women with him with whom he has engaged in *mut'ah*, he should let her go."»

3. Muslim narrated from Sabrah al-Juhani, that: «He was with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said: "O' people, I had given you permission to engage in *mut'ah* with women, but now Allah has forbidden that until the Day of Resurrection. So whoever has any such woman with him, he should let her go, and do not take back anything that you gave to them."»²⁹⁸

4. Muslim narrated from 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib that: «He heard Ibn 'Abbâs being lenient with regard to *mut'ah*. He said, "Wait a minute, O' Ibn 'Abbâs. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade it on the day of Khaybar, and he forbade the meat of domestic donkeys."»²⁹⁹

'Umar did not introduce the prohibition on *mut'ah* from his own ideas, rather he was following the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when he forbade it permanently during the year of the conquest of Makkah in 8 A.H., after he had forbidden it at Khaybar in 6 A.H., then permitted it during the year of the Conquest, when the people engaged in *mut'ah* for fifteen days, then the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade it until the Day of Resurrection.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ Muslim, *Kitâb an-Nikâh*, hadith no. 1406.

²⁹⁹ Muslim, *Kitâb an-Nikâh*, 2/1027, hadith no. 1407.

³⁰⁰ *Al-Qadâ' fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 2/756.

2.10. Fiqhi views favoured by 'Umar (ؓ)

'Umar influenced the judicial system with his *ijtihād* concerning *qisās*, *ḥadd* punishments, crimes and *ta'zeer* punishments. He also played a role in the development of the schools of fiqh with his *ijtihād* which is indicative of the depth of his knowledge and understanding of the aims of shari'ah. There are many view in fiqh for which he expressed a preference; there follow some examples:

1. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that the skin of a dead animal may be purified by means of tanning, if it was pure when it was alive.
2. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that it is *makrooh* to pray wearing fox skins.
3. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that it is not *makrooh* for a fasting person to use the *siwāk* after the sun has passed its zenith; rather it is *mustahabb*.
4. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that wiping over the *khuffayn* etc. is allowed for one day and night in the case of a non-traveller, and three days and nights in the case of a traveller.
5. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that the period for wiping over the *khuffayn* starts after a person breaks his *wuḍoo*'.
6. The time of *Jumu'ah* is when the sun has passed its zenith.
7. 'Umar was of the view that touching the penis invalidates *wuḍoo*'.
8. 'Umar (ؓ) was of the view that the *takbeer* of 'Eid begins after *Fajr* on the day of 'Arafah and lasts until 'Aṣr on the last of the days of *at-Tashreeq*.
9. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were of the view that it is better to walk in front of the bier (*janāzah*).

10. He was of the view that zakah is obligatory on behalf of children and the insane.
11. 'Umar favoured the view that parties to a transaction have the option of nullifying the deal so long as they are still together.
12. He was of the view that payment in advance for animals is not valid.
13. He was of the view that if there is a condition that if a debt is not paid when it becomes due then the item given in pledge for that debt is considered to have been sold in return for the debt owed, this is an invalid condition.
14. 'Umar was of the view that if a creditor finds his goods with a debtor, then he is most entitled to them.
15. 'Umar was of the view that a girl should not be given her money after she reaches puberty until she gets married or gives birth, or until she has been in her husband's house for a year.
16. 'Umar was of the view that the compensation for an animal's eye is one-quarter of its value.
17. 'Umar was of the view that pre-emption is only with regard to common property that has not been divided, and that the neighbour has no right of pre-emption.
18. He was of the view that it is permissible to have a *musâqâh*³⁰¹ agreement for all kinds of trees.
19. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were of the view that it is permissible to hire a worker in return for giving him clothes.

³⁰¹ *Musâqâh*: Sharecropping contract over the lease of a plantation, limited to one crop period. [Hans Wehr Dictionary]

20. 'Umar was of the view that a gift is not irrevocable until it has been acquired.
21. He was of the view that a gift given to someone other than a relative may be taken back unless one has been rewarded for it, but whoever gives a gift to a relative has no right to take it back.
22. He was of the view that the period for announcing lost property is one year.
23. He was of the view that it is permissible to take and use lost property that is of insignificant value, without announcing it.
24. 'Umar was of the view that if a person has announced lost property for the proper length of time and he does not know who it belongs to, then it becomes like the rest of his possessions, whether he is rich or poor.
25. 'Umar was of the view that lost property is the same whether it is found inside or outside the sanctuary.
26. He was of the view that the foundling should stay with the one who found him, if he is trustworthy.
27. He was of the view that it is permissible to change one's will. He said: "A man may change whatever he wants of his will."
28. 'Umar was of the view that *kalālah* refers to a person who dies and has no children or parents living.
29. He was of the view that if there are sisters and daughters, they are entitled to whatever is left of the estate after it has been divided.
30. If there is a husband, a mother, siblings through the mother, and siblings through the father and mother, this is an issue of inheritance concerning which the scholars differed in the past and in modern times. It is narrated that 'Umar, 'Uthmān and Zayd ibn Thābit (may Allah be pleased with them all) allocated one-third to be shared

among the children of both parents and the children of the mother, with each male getting the share of two females.

31. He was of the view that grandmothers should get one-sixth, even if they are many. This is the view of Abu Bakr.

32. 'Umar was of the view that if there are a mother, a sister and a grandfather, the sister gets one-half, the mother gets one-third of what is left, and the grandfather gets what is left.

33. 'Umar was of the view that if there is a husband and two parents, the husband should be given half, the mother one-third of what is left and the father gets whatever is left. If there are a wife and two parents, the wife is given one-quarter, the mother is given one-third of what is left and the father gets whatever is left.

These two issues are known as *al-'Umariyatayn*, because 'Umar gave these rulings.

34. He was of the view that relatives should be given some of the inheritance if they are not entitled to a specific share.³⁰²

These are some of the views favoured by 'Umar in the field of fiqh. They deserve further study and examination, as I have only mentioned them in brief here.

³⁰² See *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 3/754-774.

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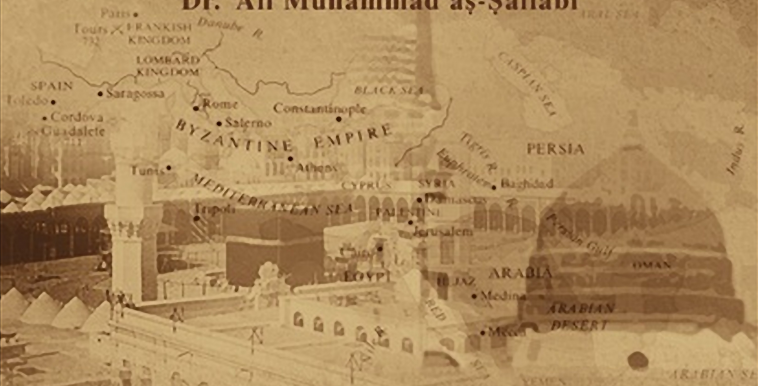
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HIS LIFE & TIMES

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Vol. 2

Dr. ‘Ali Muhammad aş-Şallâbi



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Dr. ‘Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi

Translated by

Nasiruddin al-Khattab

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Symbols Directory

(ﷲ) : *Subhânahu wa Ta'âla* — “The Exalted”

(ﷺ) : *Ṣalla-Allâhu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* — “Blessings and peace
be upon him”

(ﷻ) : *'Alayhis-Salâm* — “May peace be upon him”

(ﷺ) : *Raḍia-Allâhu 'Anhu* — “May Allah be pleased with him”

(ﷺ) : *Raḍia-Allâhu 'Anha* — “May Allah be pleased with her”

Transliteration Chart

أ	a
آ. إ	â
ب	b
ت	t
ة	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ

CHAPTER FIVE

The Fiqh of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in Dealing with the Governors

When the Islamic state expanded during the caliphate of 'Umar, he divided the state into large administrative sections in order to make it easier to rule it and to supervise its income. The conquests were a primary reason for 'Umar's development of the state's institutions, including that of governorship.

1. The Regions of the State

The division of the state into provinces is in some ways a continuation of the division into provinces at the time of Abu Bakr, with some changes in the governorship posts in many cases. There follows a brief look at these provinces.

1.1. Makkah al-Mukarramah

During the period of 'Umar (ؓ), the governorship of Makkah was held by Muḥraz ibn Ḥârithah ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd Shams. Then Qunqudh ibn 'Umayr ibn Jad'ân at-Tameemi became 'Umar's governor in Makkah, and his case is like those who came before him; there are no reports of how long he was governor or of any events that occurred during his governorship. After him, Nâfi' ibn al-Ḥârith al-

Khuzā'i became 'Umar's governor in Makkah. When 'Umar died, Nāfi' was the governor of Makkah. The sources mention some events that took place during his governorship, such as his buying the house of Safwān ibn Umayyah with the purpose of turning it into a prison; that was narrated by Bukhari.¹

It is also narrated that Nāfi' met 'Umar in 'Uṣfān when he came for Ḥajj. 'Umar asked him: "Whom have you appointed over the valley (meaning Makkah)?" Nāfi' said, "Ibn Abza." He asked, "Who is Ibn Abza?" He said, "One of our freed slaves." He then asked, "Have you appointed a freed slave over them?" He said, "He is well versed in the Book of Allah and has knowledge of the laws of inheritance." 'Umar said, "Your Prophet said, 'Allah raises some in status by this Book and lowers others.'"²

During 'Umar's reign, the most prominent development in this province was the expansion of the *Ḥaram*, when 'Umar bought some houses that were next to the *Ḥaram* and ordered that they be demolished and the land incorporated into the sanctuary of the Mosque, around which he built a low wall. Makkah was the place where governors from all parts of the Muslim world met with the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb during the Ḥajj season, so Makkah played a major role as one of the most important provinces in the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ).

1.2. Al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah

The caliph was regarded as the primary governor of Madeenah, because he lived there and so he was running its affairs.

¹ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Khuṣoomāt*, 3/25; *Bāb ar-Rabṭ wa al-Ḥabs*, *Musnad Ahmad*, no. 232; *al-Mawṣoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*, its isnad is ṣaḥeeḥ.

² *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān* by 'Abdul-'Azeez al-'Umari, 1/67. This is the=

When the caliph 'Umar was absent from Madeenah, he would appoint someone to take his place in running its affairs. Sometimes 'Umar would appoint Zayd ibn Thābit (رضي الله عنه) to look after Madeenah when he travelled or went for Ḥajj.³ 'Umar also appointed 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib in charge of Madeenah during his absence on several occasions.⁴ Thus 'Umar followed the same policy as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, of appointing someone in charge of Madeenah during his absence. The governorship of Madeenah held a particular importance in those days for a number of reasons, chief of which was that it was the seat of the caliph 'Umar, the source of commands and instructions that went out to the various Muslim regions, and the starting point from which the *mujāhid* armies set out. In addition to that, it was the home of many of the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) whom 'Umar prevented from spreading out to other regions.⁵ Hence many seekers of knowledge came to it, wanting to learn the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and fiqh from the lips of the *Ṣaḥābah* themselves (may Allah be pleased with them).⁶

1.3. Aṭ-Ṭā'if

Aṭ-Ṭā'if is regarded as one of the most important Islamic cities at the time of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). It supplied tough fighters for the jihad movement. Its governor from the time of the Messenger (ﷺ) was 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-Āṣ, whom Abu Bakr left in place. His

=most important references on this topic. I have undertaken a summary of this book.

³ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/68.

⁴ *Tāreekh al-Ya'qobi*, 2/147.

⁵ *Ibid*, 1/157.

⁶ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/68.

governorship of aṭ-Ṭā'if continued for two years of 'Umar's caliphate, but 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ longed to go for jihad. He wrote to 'Umar asking him for permission to go and fight, and 'Umar said to him: "As for me, I will not dismiss you; rather appoint whomever you want (to act as governor in your absence)." So he appointed a man from aṭ-Ṭā'if to take his place.

'Umar appointed 'Uthmān as governor of Oman and Baḥrain⁷, and it is narrated that when he died, 'Umar appointed Sufiyān ibn 'Abdullāh ath-Thaqafī⁸ as governor of aṭ-Ṭā'if. He and 'Umar exchanged letters about taking zakah on vegetables and fruits or honey.⁹ All of that indicates that there was a great deal of agricultural activity in aṭ-Ṭā'if at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ). The city of aṭ-Ṭā'if and its environs continued to enjoy stability at the time of 'Umar. It was a resort for the people of Makkah who used to go there during the summer.¹⁰ Aṭ-Ṭā'if is regarded as one of the major cities of the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar.¹¹

1.4. Yemen

When 'Umar became caliph, Yemen was enjoying stability and its affairs were taken care of by means of governors throughout the region. 'Umar approved of the governors whom Abu Bakr had appointed over Yemen.¹²

⁷ *Tūreekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyāt*, p. 134.

⁸ *Tūreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭā'if fee al-ʿĀṣr al-Jāhili wa Ṣadr al-Islām*, by Nādia Ḥusayn Ṣaqr, p. 19.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/69.

¹² *Ghāyat al-Amāni fee Akhbār al-Qaṭr al-Yamāni*, by Yaḥya ibn al-Ḥusayn, 1/83.

Ya'la ibn Umayyah was one of Abu Bakr's governors in Yemen, and he became famous during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The historians state that he was subsequently appointed as 'Umar's governor in Yemen and he was famous for that until 'Umar died.¹³ Many sources describe events which happened to the governor of Yemen (Ya'la ibn Umayyah) and some of the people of Yemen, as well as mentioning some cases of complaints that they made against Ya'la to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, which necessitated his summoning Ya'la to Madeenah on several occasions to investigate these matters.¹⁴ When Ya'la was absent 'Umar would sometimes appoint someone else to take his place. 'Umar and Ya'la also exchanged letters about some matters of zakah.¹⁵ Ya'la himself also mentioned that he was one of the governors from whom 'Umar took half of their wealth at the end of his caliphate.¹⁶

Another of 'Umar's governors in Yemen was 'Abdullāh ibn Abi Rabee'ah al-Makhzoomi, who was appointed over a limited area of Yemen, namely al-Janad, as was stated by aṭ-Ṭabari when he listed him as one of 'Umar's governors at the time of his death. He is mentioned as 'Umar's governor of al-Janad alongside Ya'la who is described as the governor of Yemen.¹⁷

The people of Yemen played a major role in the conquests at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). They participated in the conquests of Syria, Iraq and Egypt.¹⁸ When the new Islamic cities in Iraq, such as Baṣra and Koofah, were laid out, many Yemeni tribes settled there, foremost among whom was Kindah who settled in

¹³ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 2/157.

¹⁴ *Ghāyat al-Amāni*. 1/83.

¹⁵ *Al-Amwāl* by al-Qāsim ibn Salām, p. 436.

¹⁶ *Tāreekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/157.

¹⁷ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

¹⁸ *Al-Wilāyah fee al-Buldān*, 1/71.

Koofah.¹⁹ A number of other Yemeni tribes settled in Syria, where they played a major role in the conquests. And a number of them settled in Egypt after the founding of al-Fuṣṭāṭ.²⁰

Undoubtedly these organized migrations of Yemeni tribes at the time of 'Umar were planned, and the governors of Yemen played a major role in that planning and in distributing the tribes among the various regions. Hence Yemen was one of the most important Islamic provinces at the time of 'Umar, and its role and influence in various other provinces are quite clear.²¹

1.5. Baḥrain

When 'Umar became caliph al-'Alā' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami was governor of Baḥrain, and at the beginning of his caliphate, 'Umar approved him as governor, until 14 A.H. according to the soundest opinion.²²

Al-'Alā' took part in the early stages of the jihad in Persia, where he played a major role. Towards the end of al-'Alā's governorship in Baḥrain, 'Umar issued a decree dismissing al-'Alā' from the post of governor, and appointing him as governor of Baṣra. Al-'Alā' was not happy about that, but he died before he reached Baṣra and was buried in Baḥrain. It was said that the reason for his dismissal was that he went to fight the Persians by sea without 'Umar's permission, and 'Umar did not like to send the Muslims by sea. After al-'Alā' died, 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-Āṣ was appointed as governor of Baḥrain, and he started to wage jihad in the neighbouring

¹⁹ *Al-Yemen fee Dhill al-Islām*, by Dr. 'Iṣām ad-Deen, p. 49.

²⁰ *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbâruhâ* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, Pp. 119-123.

²¹ *Al-Wilâyât 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/71.

²² *Ibid*, 1/75.

areas of Persia, until his conquests reached as far as al-Sind. 'Umar issued orders to 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ telling him to cooperate with the governor of Baṣra, Abu Moosa al-Ashʿari, in his conquests, so their armies began to cooperate in attacking Persia via Baṣra.²³

'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ was well known for his piety and his strict avoidance of *ḥarām* things. 'Uthmān was appointed as 'Umar's governor of Baḥrain at least twice. He was appointed for the first time in 15 A.H., then he was needed to lead the army near Baṣra, so 'Ayyāsh ibn Abi Thawr²⁴ was appointed as governor of Baḥrain after 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ. It seems that his time as governor was not long. Then 'Umar appointed Qudāmah ibn Madh'oon as governor of Baḥrain, who was accompanied by Abu Hurayrah, who was appointed as a judge in Baḥrain as well as being given some other duties. During Qudāmah's governorship of Baḥrain, he was praised by the people, but at the end of his governorship he was accused of drinking alcohol. After the matter was investigated, the accusation was proven to be true, so 'Umar carried out the *ḥadd* punishment on him. 'Uthmān ibn Madh'oon was the maternal uncle of 'Umar's children 'Abdullāh and Ḥaḥṣah, and 'Uthmān got angry with 'Umar but 'Umar tried to reconcile with him, and he used to say: "I saw in a dream that someone came to me and said, 'Go and reconcile with Qudāmah, for he is your brother.'" And it was said that his dismissal of Qudāmah from the post of governor of Baḥrain took place in 20 A.H. After that, the well-known *Ṣaḥābi* Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) was appointed as governor of Baḥrain. He had undertaken some other duties in Baḥrain during the governorship of Qudāmah ibn Madh'oon, and he was one of the witnesses who had testified against Qudāmah regarding his drinking. 'Umar issued a decree appointing

²³ Op. cit., 1/73.

²⁴ Ibid.

Abu Hurayrah as governor of Baḥrain after he dismissed Qudāmah.²⁵ After that, 'Umar appointed 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ ath-Thaqafi as governor of Baḥrain once again, and he remained its governor until 'Umar died.²⁶

In many texts it is stated that the governorship of Oman was added to that of Baḥrain. Reports say that when 'Uthmān ibn Abi al-ʿĀṣ was appointed as governor, he was appointed as governor of Baḥrain and al-Yamāmah.²⁷ These reports give us a strong indication that Baḥrain had close ties to both Oman and al-Yamāmah, and that these two regions were considered to be part of the province of Baḥrain at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ). The geographical and human connections between these two regions and Baḥrain are quite obvious. The phrase "Baḥrain and surrounding areas" which is often used by the historians may be understood as referring to Oman and al-Yamāmah. Baḥrain was a principal source of *kharāj* and *jizyah*, which points to the prosperity of this province at that time. The Muslim tribes of Baḥrain and their rulers took part in the conquests of Persia and the east, and they played an important role in those conquests.²⁸

1.6. Egypt

'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was the one who led the conquest of Egypt, as will be discussed in detail when we look at the conquests. 'Umar appointed him as governor of Egypt and he remained in that post until 'Umar died, despite his occasional differences with 'Umar

²⁵ *Al-Wilāyah ʿala al-Buldān*, 1/75.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

²⁸ *Al-Wilāyah ʿala al-Buldān*, 1/76.

which led 'Umar to threaten to discipline him. 'Amr was the main governor of Egypt, but there were other minor governors in Egypt, such as 'Abdullāh ibn Abi as-Sarāḥ, who was governor of as-Sa'eed (Upper Egypt) at the time of 'Umar's death.²⁹

We may note that during the governorship of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ in Egypt, 'Umar frequently intervened in many affairs of governorship.³⁰ 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ made use of the Egyptians' experience in matters of *kharāj* and *jizyah*, and he employed them in this work.³¹ It is well known that 'Amr did not allow his troops to farm and become distracted by that, and he punished those who disobeyed him in that, acting on the commands of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.³² This naturally made the troops more devoted to matters of jihad, as they did not have time to get used to a life of ease and did not become attached to the land. The troops were allocated salaries from the *bayt al-māl* which meant that they had no need for that.

With support from the caliph 'Umar, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ was able to organize the affairs of Egypt within a few years and it took its place as a major Islamic province. A number of events took place there which indicate that it was a stable province despite the dangers which surrounded it, such as the ongoing attempts of the Byzantines to recapture it by attacking Alexandria from the sea.

This province was fertile ground for the spread of Islam at the time of the caliph 'Umar, because of the justice and mercy that became widespread, which its people had never seen before, in addition to their conviction of the truths of Islam. So they joined the ranks of Islam.

²⁹ *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 173.

³⁰ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/79.

³¹ *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbāruhum*, p. 152.

³² *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/82.

Administrative matters in Egypt ran smoothly because when 'Amr was the governor he was also responsible for the *kharāj*, and this did not prevent 'Amr from asking other governors in areas under his control for help, as we have stated above. But the principal governor, who answered directly to the caliph throughout 'Umar's reign, was 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ. 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ benefited from the help of some of the local people in organizing the *kharāj* and other financial affairs.³³

1.7. The provinces of Syria

When Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ؓ) died, the one who was responsible for the army and land of Syria was Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (ؓ). When 'Umar became caliph, he issued a decree dismissing Khâlid ibn al-Waleed from the governorship of Syria and appointing Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ in his stead, to be in-charge of all the governors of Syria and to govern the Muslim community there.³⁴ When Abu 'Ubaydah was appointed governor of Syria, he started to organize its affairs and he appointed agents to act on his behalf in various regions of Syria. He began to reorganize its affairs as there were already agents in some regions, some of whom Abu 'Ubaydah approved of and others he dismissed. Khaleefah ibn Khayyât says: "When Abu 'Ubaydah conquered Syria he appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân over Palestine and its environs, Sharaḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah over Jordan, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed over Damascus, and Ḥabeeb ibn Muslimah over Homs, then he dismissed him and appointed 'Abdullâh ibn Qarṭ ath-Thamâli³⁵, then he dismissed him and

³³ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/83.

³⁴ *Tahdheeb Târeekh Dimashq*, 1/152.

³⁵ Al-Azdi: He was a Companion of the Prophet and it is reported that he took part in the conquest of Syria.

appointed 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit, then he dismissed him and reinstated 'Abdullâh ibn Qart.³⁶

Sometimes he would send some of his companions to govern certain areas of Syria for a specific length of time, such as when Abu 'Ubaydah sent Mu'âdh ibn Jabal to govern Jordan³⁷, or when he appointed people in his stead when he went out for jihad. He appointed Sa'eed ibn Zayd ibn 'Umar ibn Nufayl³⁸ in charge of Damascus when he went out to *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem). Throughout his governorship of Syria Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah have mercy on him) was an example of a righteous and pious man whose example was followed by his fellow governors and by the common folk. He was martyred, as we have mentioned above, in the plague of 'Amwâs, then Mu'âdh was appointed as governor after him, but he was martyred a few days later. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) came to know of the deaths of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh, he appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân (رضي الله عنه) as leader of the Muslim troops in Syria and he sent other different commanders to different parts of Syria. Yazeed was experienced in leading armies, and had been at the head of one of the armies that Abu Bakr had sent to conquer Syria. Abu 'Ubaydah also appointed him as his deputy in charge of Damascus on a number of occasions when he went out on campaigns.³⁹ The historians state that when 'Umar appointed Yazeed in charge of the armies of Syria, he appointed other commanders and distributed them throughout the various regions, and he put Yazeed in charge of Palestine and Jordan.⁴⁰ Yazeed's period as governor in Syria was short, hence there is little mention of him in the historical

³⁶ *Tāreekh Khaleefah*, p. 155.

³⁷ *Futooh ash-Shâm*, p. 248.

³⁸ *Al-Futooh*, Ibn A'tham al-Koofi, p. 289; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/90.

³⁹ *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 137.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, Pp. 145, 146.

sources. Yazeed died in 18 A.H. Just before his death he appointed his brother Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân to his position, and he wrote to 'Umar informing him of that. Yazeed's period of governorship was approximately one year.⁴¹

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) approved of Mu'âwiyah as governor and he made some adjustments in the running of Syria's affairs after the death of Yazeed. He limited Mu'âwiyah's authority to the garrison of Damascus and collecting its *kharâj*; he put limits on Mu'âwiyah's authority with regard to the judiciary and prayer, when he sent two other Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) whom he put in charge of the judiciary and of prayer.⁴² This was a limitation of Mu'âwiyah's authority, especially since the prayer was delegated to someone else, although usually the leader also led the prayers. Perhaps there were reasons why 'Umar adopted this new policy which began to appear in other regions where he took the same approach as he did with Mu'âwiyah. Mu'âwiyah was well known for his forbearance and generosity which made some groups of people come from Iraq and elsewhere to live in his province.⁴³ 'Umar appointed some agents in Syria, whom he put under the authority of Mu'âwiyah. During Mu'âwiyah's governorship of Syria, he undertook some campaigns against the Byzantines in the north of Syria; these were known as *aṣ-Ṣawâ'if* (the summer campaigns).⁴⁴

Mu'âwiyah continued as the governor of Syria for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate. There were other governors in some regions of Syria who were in direct contact with the caliph in Madeenah, but Mu'âwiyah is regarded as the most famous of them,

⁴¹ *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Aṣr an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 493.

⁴² *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/92.

⁴³ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

⁴⁴ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/92.

as he was the governor of al-Balqa', Jordan, Palestine, Antioch, Qalqeeliyah, Ma'arrah al-Maṣarreene and other cities of Syria.⁴⁵ Some historians describe him as the governor of Syria whilst others are more circumspect, describing him as 'Umar's governor over part of Syria. Some of them state that before 'Umar died, he gave Mu'āwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyān authority over all of Syria.⁴⁶ It must be noted that there were ongoing changes in all provinces, based on changing military circumstances and the circumstances of the state in general in those days. Jordan was sometimes a separate province and was sometimes joined to other regions; sometimes some regions would be taken from it and added to Syria or Palestine, and so on.⁴⁷

1.8 Iraq and Persia

The conquests in Iraq began during the days of Abu Bakr. At first they were led by al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah ash-Shaybānī, until Khâlīd ibn al-Waleed came to Iraq, then he was appointed as governor. When Abu Bakr ordered Khâlīd to go to Syria, he reinstated al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah as governor. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) became caliph, he dismissed al-Muthanna and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi. Al-Muthanna was dismissed at the same time as Khâlīd was dismissed, which astonished the people, but 'Umar said: "I did not dismiss them because of any wrong that they did; rather the people exaggerated about them and I feared that the people would depend on them."⁴⁸ Despite his dismissal, al-Muthanna was a sincere soldier who

⁴⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/93.

⁴⁶ *Tāreekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyāt*, 155; *Siyar I'lām an-Nubala'*, 3/88.

⁴⁷ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/102.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 1/108.

participated with Abu 'Ubayd in most of his battles and did well.⁴⁹

After Abu 'Ubayd was martyred, al-Muthanna was reinstated as leader, then Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ was appointed as commander of the army in Iraq. The wounds that al-Muthanna had received on the day of al-Jasr got the better of him and he fell sick and died before Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ reached Iraq.⁵⁰ Baṣra had just started to appear on the stage of provincial events before the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, but the victory of al-Qâdisiyah and the fall of al-Madâ'in to the Muslims are regarded as the beginning of a new stage in Iraq, where the provinces took on a certain shape and their general features began to become clear, whether in Baṣrah and in Koofah and their surrounding towns and villages which were regarded as part of them, or in other, separate provinces in Persia.⁵¹

1.8.1. Baṣrah

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sent Shurayḥ ibn 'Âmir, one of the tribe of Bani Sa'd ibn Bakr to the area of Baṣrah before it was founded, to support Qutbah ibn Qatâdah. Then 'Umar appointed him as governor of Baṣrah and its environs. He was killed in one of the battles.⁵² Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sent 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân to Baṣra with a troop of soldiers, and appointed him as governor thereof. That took place in 14 A.H., not in 16 A.H., as Ṣâliḥ Aḥmad al-'Ali said: "Some historians think that 'Utbah was sent in 16 A.H., after the battle of al-Qâdisiyah or Jaloola', but the overwhelming majority of historians say that he was sent in 14 A.H., which makes us think that that is more likely to be the case."⁵³

⁴⁹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/28.

⁵⁰ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/111.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 1/113.

⁵² *Tāreekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, p. 155.

⁵³ *At-Tandheemât al-Ijtimâ'iyah wa al-Iqtisâdiyyah fee al-Baṣra*, p. 36.

The appointment of 'Utbah as governor of Baṣra was an important stage in the founding of this province. His era was filled with many great works, such as his conquests of parts of Persia that lay near to him on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.⁵⁴ 'Utbah asked 'Umar to relieve him of the duties of governor, but 'Umar refused to do so; that took place during the Ḥajj season, when 'Umar insisted that he go back to his post. 'Utbah departed but he died on the way back to Baṣra. When news of his death reached 'Umar, he said: "I killed him, were it not that his appointed time had come," and he spoke highly of him and praised him. His death occurred in 17 A.H.⁵⁵ Then al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah was appointed after him, and he was the first one to set up the records of Baṣra. He remained governor of Baṣra until 'Umar dismissed him in 17 A.H., after al-Mugheerah was accused of *zinā*. 'Umar investigated the matter and proved al-Mugheerah's innocence, and he had the three witnesses flogged, but 'Umar dismissed al-Mugheerah so as to be on the safe side and to protect the public interest, but 'Umar appointed him as governor elsewhere after that.⁵⁶

After the dismissal of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, 'Umar appointed Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ؑ) as governor of Baṣra. Abu Moosa is regarded — and rightfully so — as the most famous governor of Baṣra during the days of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Numerous places in Persia were conquered during his time. He used to engage in jihad himself and he sent commanders to many places in Baṣra. During his period, the troops of Baṣra managed to conquer al-Ahwāz and its environs, and they conquered a number of important places. The period of his governorship was filled with jihad.

⁵⁴ *Tāreekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyāt*, Pp. 127, 128.

⁵⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/115.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 1/117.

Abu Moosa cooperated with the governors of neighbouring provinces in many wars and conquests. He undertook great efforts to organize the conquered regions and appointed agents to help secure them and organize their affairs.

There was a great deal of correspondence between Abu Moosa and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb on numerous issues, such as 'Umar's advice to Abu Moosa on how to receive people in his *majlis*, and his advice to Abu Moosa to fear Allah and try to help the people. This was valuable advice, in which 'Umar said: "The happiest of people is the one under whose care people are happy because of him, and the most miserable of people is the one under whose care people are miserable because of him. Beware of indulging in worldly pleasures or allowing your agents to do so, lest you become like an animal that sees some vegetation and starts grazing it, aiming to get fat, but its death is in its fat."⁵⁷

There is also some correspondence between 'Umar and Abu Moosa which points to various administrative and executive issues which Abu Moosa undertook on 'Umar's instructions. Most of this correspondence has been compiled by Muhammad Ḥameedullāh in his valuable book on political documents.⁵⁸

Abu Moosa's governorship of Baṣra is regarded as one of the best periods, as described by one of the descendents of the people of Baṣra, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, who said: "No rider ever came to Baṣra who was better for its people than Abu Moosa."⁵⁹ In addition to being the governor of Baṣra, Abu Moosa was also the best teacher for its people; he taught them the Qur'an and taught them about their religion.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Manâqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 130.

⁵⁸ *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*.

⁵⁹ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/389.

⁶⁰ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/120.

During the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, many cities in Persia which were conquered at that time became subject to Baṣra and were run by the governor of Baṣra who appointed agents in charge of them; those agents were in direct contact with him. Thus Abu Moosa is regarded as one of the greatest governors of 'Umar and the correspondence between 'Umar and Abu Moosa is regarded as one of the greatest sources of information on the way that 'Umar interacted with his governors.⁶¹

1.8.2. Koofah

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ is regarded as the first governor of Koofah after it was founded; indeed he is the one who founded it, acting on 'Umar's instructions. He was the governor of Koofah and the surrounding regions before Koofah was built. Sa'd remained the governor of Koofah and played his role there to the fullest extent. After settling in Koofah, Sa'd achieved great conquests in Persia.⁶²

Sa'd also introduced a number of agricultural reforms in his province, such as when a group of local chiefs asked him to dig a channel to serve the farmers in their areas. Sa'd wrote to his agents in that area ordering them to dig a channel for them. So his agent assembled some workers and dug it for them.

Sa'd organized the affairs of the regions belonging to Koofah, and appointed agents in charge of them, after consulting 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The wise men of Koofah admired and praised Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ.

When 'Umar asked Jareer ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ about Sa'd and the way he was running the affairs of

⁶¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/120.

⁶² *Futooh al-Buldān*, p. 139; *Tāreekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/151.

governorship, Jareer said: "I left him in his province the most noble of men, with the strongest authority and the least harshness; he is like a caring mother towards them. He is the strongest of men at times of war and the most beloved of Quraysh to the people."⁶³

Although the elite and wise men of Koofah accepted and praised Sa'd, there were some complaints about him that were made by some of the common folk, so he was dismissed, as we will discuss more fully when we look at the complaints that were made against governors. After the dismissal of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, 'Umar issued a decree appointing 'Ammār ibn Yâsir to lead the prayers in Koofah. It may be noted that 'Ammār was one of the leaders in Koofah, and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ used to seek the help of those leaders during his governorship. Hence 'Ammār had extensive prior experience of governorship before he was appointed as governor. 'Ammār's governorship differed from Sa'd's, because 'Umar appointed other people with 'Ammār to share the responsibility and undertake different tasks. 'Ammār was to lead the prayers, Ibn Mas'ood was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl* and 'Uthmân ibn Ḥunayf was in charge of measuring land. Hence the situation differed somewhat to the situation at the time of Sa'd. We cannot ignore this new distribution of responsibility in the governorship. Each of them did the tasks that were allocated to him. 'Ammār led the prayers, organized the affairs of the province and led the army, and he achieved some conquests. During his governorship the people of Koofah took part in a number of battles against the Persians who had rallied their troops against the Muslims. 'Ammār organized his province in accordance with this war situation, following 'Umar's instructions. 'Ammār continued to do his duties in the province of Koofah with Ibn Mas'ood who, alongside his running the financial affairs of the province also taught

⁶³ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/123.

the people Qur'an and religious matters.⁶⁴ 'Ammâr's governorship of Koofah lasted for approximately one year and nine months. 'Umar dismissed him on the basis of a number of complaints made by the people of Koofah against him. 'Umar said to 'Ammâr: "Are you upset because of this dismissal?" 'Ammâr said: "I was not happy when I was appointed, but I was upset when I was dismissed." And it was said that he said: "I did not feel happy when you appointed me and I was not sad when you dismissed me."⁶⁵ It is also reported that he asked 'Umar to let him off this job when he felt that the people of Koofah did not like him, so 'Umar let him off and did not dismiss him.⁶⁶

Then 'Umar appointed Jubayr ibn Muṭ'im as governor of Koofah, then he dismissed him before he set out for Koofah, because 'Umar had ordered him to conceal the news of this appointment, but the news spread among the people, so 'Umar became angry and dismissed him. Then he appointed al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah as governor of Koofah and he continued in that post until 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) died.⁶⁷

1.8.3. Al-Madâ'in

Al-Madâ'in was the capital of Chosroes, which was conquered by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ. Sa'd settled there for a while, then he moved to Koofah after it was founded. One member of Sa'd's army was Salmân al-Fârisi (ﷺ), who took part in a number of battles against the Persians and played a major role in calling them to Islam before fighting took place. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb appointed him as

⁶⁴ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/157.

⁶⁵ *Al-Futooh* by Ibn A'tham, 2/82.

⁶⁶ *Nihâyat al-Irb*, 19/368.

⁶⁷ *Târeekh Khaleefah*, p. 155; *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

governor of al-Madā'in and he treated it's people well. He was a living example of the application of Islamic teachings. It is reported that he would have refused the post of governor, were it not that 'Umar forced him to accept it. He used to write to 'Umar asking him to let him off, but 'Umar refused. Salmân (ؓ) was well known for his asceticism. He used to wear wool, ride a donkey and eat barley bread; he lived a very simple life.⁶⁸

Salmân remained in al-Madā'in until he died, most likely in 32 A.H., during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. It seems that Salmân was not the governor of al-Madā'in at the end of 'Umar's caliphate, because 'Umar appointed Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as governor of al-Madā'in, but the historians did not state that 'Umar dismissed Salmân. Perhaps he asked 'Umar to let him off and 'Umar agreed after having refused to let him off, and he appointed Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as governor after him. There are numerous reports which speak of Ḥudhayfah's appointment as governor of al-Madā'in, such as the letter sent by 'Umar to the people of al-Madā'in appointing Ḥudhayfah as their governor, in which 'Umar told the people of al-Madā'in to hear and obey Ḥudhayfah. Ḥudhayfah remained governor of al-Madā'in for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate and throughout the caliphate of 'Uthmân.⁶⁹

1.8.4. Azerbaijan

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân was the first governor of Azerbaijan. After he moved to al-Madā'in, 'Utbah ibn Farqad as-Sulami was appointed as governor of Azerbaijan. During his governorship there was a great deal of correspondence between him and 'Umar. When 'Utbah ibn Farqad came to Azerbaijan he found that they had a kind

⁶⁸ *Murooj adh-Dhahab*, 2/306; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/131.

⁶⁹ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 2/364.

of sweet dish called *al-khabees*, so he decided to have some made for 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb; he wrapped it in skins and other things to preserve it, and sent it to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in Madeenah. When he received it, he tasted the *khabees* and liked it. 'Umar said: "Have all the *Muhâjireen* eaten their fill of it?" The envoy said, "No, it is something that he made just for you." So 'Umar ordered him to take it back to 'Utbah in Azerbaijan and he wrote to him saying: "O 'Utbah, this is not from your wealth or the wealth of your fathers. Let the Muslims eat their fill in their camps of what you have eaten your fill of in your camp. Beware of luxury and of wearing the clothes of the people of *shirk* and of wearing silk, for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade wearing silk."⁷⁰ This incident is narrated in numerous reports which support one another. 'Utbah continued as governor of Azerbaijan for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate and for part of 'Uthmân's caliphate.

There were a number of governors in various regions of Iraq and Persia during the time of 'Umar, some of whose provinces were separate and others whose provinces were connected to one of the two great provinces of Iraq, where the administration of all of Iraq and Persia was based, namely Koofah and Baṣra. Among the cities which had their own governors were Moṣul, Ḥalwân and Kaskar.⁷¹

2. Appointment of Governors at the Time of 'Umar

'Umar followed the method of the Prophet (ﷺ) in selecting governors. He only appointed those who were qualified, trustworthy

⁷⁰ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/133.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 1/133, 134, 135.

and more suited than others for this type of work, striving to make the best choice. He did not appoint anyone who asked to be a governor. He thought that selecting governors was akin to fulfilling a trust, whereby he was obliged to appoint the best man he could find for each post, and turning away from the best candidate and choosing someone else would be a betrayal of Allah, His Messenger and the believers.⁷² Concerning this, he said: "I am responsible for my trust and what I am in charge of. I will examine all the issues myself, *insha' Allāh*, and I will not delegate that to anyone. I can only rely on those who are trustworthy and sincere towards the Muslims, and I will not rely on anyone else."⁷³ And he said: "Whoever appoints a man over a group when there is a man in that group who is more pleasing to Allah, has betrayed Allah, betrayed His Messenger and betrayed the believers."⁷⁴ He also said: "Whoever is appointed in charge of some of the affairs of the Muslims and he appoints a man because of friendship or blood ties, has betrayed Allah, His Messenger and the Muslims."⁷⁵

2.1. The most important bases on which 'Umar appointed governors and the conditions he stipulated for them

2.1.1. Capability and trustworthiness

'Umar applied this principle and preferred more capable men over others. He dismissed Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah and appointed Mu'āwiyah instead. Shurahbeel said to him: "Did you dismiss me

⁷² *Waqā'i' Nadwah an-Nadhm al-Islāmiyah*, 1/295, 296.

⁷³ *Dawr al-Ḥijāz fee al-Ḥayāt as-Siyāsiyah*, p. 255.

⁷⁴ *Al-Fatāwa*, 28/42.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 28/138.

because you are not pleased with me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" He said, "No; I think well of you, but I wanted a man who is more capable."⁷⁶ One of the most eloquent comments narrated from 'Umar concerning this matter is his saying: "O' Allah, I complain to You of the capability of the evildoer and the incapability of the trustworthy one."⁷⁷

2.1.2. The role of knowledge in appointment of governors

'Umar followed the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in appointing leaders of the army in particular. Aṭ-Ṭabari said: "When an army of believers gathered around 'Umar, he would appoint over them a man who had knowledge and understanding of Islam."⁷⁸

2.1.3. Knowing how to do things

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb appointed some people, and did not appoint others who were of greater virtue than them, because the former knew how to do things.⁷⁹ In this case, those whom 'Umar passed over were better in terms of religious commitment and piety, and better in character, but their experience in running affairs was less than that of others. It was not essential to combine both factors. This principle which was set out by 'Umar is still followed today in the most advanced nations, where a man of religious commitment, piety and good character who does not have any experience of matters of government is more likely to be ensnared by the tricks of those who follow their whims and desires. But the one who is smart

⁷⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/39.

⁷⁷ *Al-Fatāwa*, 28/42.

⁷⁸ *Nidhām al-Hukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/479.

⁷⁹ *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islām*, 2/56.

and experienced will grasp things quickly and understand what is behind the spoken word. This is the very reason why 'Umar would avoid appointing a man who did not know anything about evil. He asked about a man whom he wanted to appoint as an agent and he was told, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, he does not know anything about evil." 'Umar said to the man, "Woe to you, he is more likely to fall into it."⁸⁰ This is not one of the characteristics required for administration and ruling, rather the criterion for determining who is best suited for this field is knowledge of how to do the job.⁸¹

2.1.4. Desert-dwellers and town-dwellers

When appointing governors and agents, 'Umar would pay attention to their characteristics, natures, customs and habits. It was known that he would not appoint a desert-dweller in charge of town-dwellers.⁸² Thus he paid attention to social and behavioural factors when selecting employees. Both desert-dwellers and town-dwellers have their own natures, attitudes, customs and traditions, and it is natural that the governor should understand the mentality of those under his care; it is not fair to appoint over them a man who knows nothing of that, who may regard their customs as odd and their nature as strange.⁸³

2.1.5. Compassion and mercy towards those of whom he is in charge

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) sought to achieve compassion and mercy towards those of whom the governor was in charge. He often told the leaders

⁸⁰ *Nidhām al-Ḥukm fee ash-Shar'ee'ah wa at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/482.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*, 1/282.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1/283.

of jihad not to undertake unnecessarily risky missions and not to put the Muslims in grave danger. 'Umar wrote to a man from Banu Aslam appointing him to some position of authority. The man entered to meet 'Umar and saw 'Umar kissing one of his children who was on his lap. The man said, "Do you do this, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? By Allah, I have never kissed any child of mine." 'Umar said, "Then by Allah you are the least merciful of people. You will never do any work for me." So 'Umar rejected him and did not appoint him.⁸⁴

One of his armies went on a campaign in Persia and reached a river that had no bridge. The commander of the army ordered one of his soldiers to go down on a very cold day and look for a place where the army could cross. The man said: "I am afraid that I will die if I enter the water." But the commander forced him to do that. The man entered the water, screaming, "O' 'Umar, O' 'Umar!" and soon after that he died. News of that reached 'Umar when he was in the marketplace of Madeenah, and he said, "Here I am, here I am!" He sent word dismissing the commander of that army and he said: "Were it not for the fact that I do not want to set a precedent, I would have retaliated against you. You will never do any work for me again."⁸⁵

'Umar addressed his governors and said: "Know that no forbearance is more beloved to Allah and more far-reaching than the forbearance and kindness of a leader, and nothing is more hated by Allah and more far-reaching than the ignorance and foolishness of a leader."⁸⁶

2.1.6. He did not appoint any of his relatives

'Umar was keen to avoid appointing any of his relatives, despite the fact that some of them were qualified and had come to

⁸⁴ *Maḥq̣ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/519.

⁸⁵ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 150.

⁸⁶ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 334.

Islam early on, such as his paternal cousin Sa'eed ibn Zayd and his son 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar. One of his companions heard him complaining about a problem with the people of Koofah and their governor, when 'Umar said: "Would that I could find a strong, trustworthy, Muslim man to appoint over them." The man said, "By Allah, I will tell you of one such, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar." 'Umar said, "May Allah kill you! You did not say that for the sake of Allah."⁸⁷ And he used to say, "Whoever appoints a man because of friendship or blood ties, and for no other reason, has betrayed Allah and His Messenger."⁸⁸

2.1.7. He did not appoint anyone who wanted to be appointed

He did not appoint any man who wanted to be appointed. Concerning that he said: "Whoever seeks this will not be appointed." In this approach he was following the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ).

2.1.8. Forbidding governors and agents to engage in trade

'Umar forbade agents and governors to engage in trade, whether they were selling or buying.⁸⁹ It was narrated that an agent of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb whose name was al-Ḥārith ibn Ka'b ibn Wahb started to show signs of prosperity. 'Umar asked him about the source of this wealth and he replied: "I had some money and I engaged in trade with it." 'Umar said, "By Allah, we did not send

⁸⁷ *Manâqib 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 108; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/128.

⁸⁸ *Al-Fatāwa*, 28/138.

⁸⁹ *Al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Aṣr 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 213.

you to engage in trade!” and he took from his the profits that he had made.⁹⁰

2.1.9. Recording the net worth of his agents at the time of their appointment

‘Umar recorded the net worth of his agents and governors before they were appointed, so that he could bring them to account for any increase after their governorship that was not of a regular type of growth. Some of them tried to justify engaging in trade, but he did not accept what they said, and he told them: “We have sent you as governors, not as merchants.”⁹¹

2.1.10. Conditions stipulated by ‘Umar for his agents

When ‘Umar appointed an agent, he would write a document for him, which he would have witnessed by a number of the Anṣār, stipulating that he would not ride a non-Arabian horse, he would not eat fine bread, he would not wear fine clothes, and he would not close his door to Muslims in need. Then he would say, “O’ Allah, bear witness.”⁹²

These conditions obliged the governor to adhere to a simple, ascetic life, and to be humble towards people. This is the first step in reforming the ummah by making them accept a moderate standard of living, clothing and transportation. With such a lifestyle that was based on moderation, its affairs would be set in order. This was a wise move, because ‘Umar could not force every member of the ummah to do something that is not regarded as obligatory in Islam, but he could

⁹⁰ Op. cit.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 215.

⁹² *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 1/510.

force the governors and leaders to do that. If they committed themselves to that, they would be setting an example in society. This was a successful plan to reform society and protect it from the causes of decline.⁹³

2.1.11. Consultation when selecting governors

The selection of governors was made after the caliph had consulted the senior *Ṣaḥābah*.⁹⁴ 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said to his companions one day: "Show me a man who, if he is the leader of some people, it is as if he is not a leader, and if he is not a leader, it is as if he is a leader,"⁹⁵ and they pointed out ar-Rabee' ibn Ziyād.⁹⁶

'Umar consulted the *Ṣaḥābah* as to whom he should appoint as governor of Koofah, and said to them: "Who could tackle the problems of the people of Koofah for me, and their false accusations against their governors? If I appoint over them a man with good morals, they will regard him as weak, but if I appoint over them one who is strong, they will force him to overstep the limit with them." Then he said: "O' people, what do you say about a man who is weak but is a pious Muslim, and another who is strong and tough but not so religiously committed? Which one is better suited to be a governor?" Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah spoke up and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the weak Muslim's commitment to Islam counts in his favour but his weakness counts against you and the Muslims; the fact that the strong man is less pious counts against him but his strength counts in your favour and that of the Muslims. So do what you think is best." 'Umar said, "You have spoken the truth, O' Mugheerah."

⁹³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 19, 20/268.

⁹⁴ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 114.

⁹⁵ *Farā'id al-Kalām*, p. 165.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Then he appointed him as governor of Koofah and said to him, "Try to be one whom the righteous trust and the evildoers fear." Al-Mugheerah (ؓ) said, "I shall try my best, O' Ameer al-Mu'mineen."⁹⁷

2.1.12. Testing agents before appointing them

'Umar tested his agents before appointing them, and in some cases this testing took a long time, as was stated clearly by al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays who said: "I came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) and he kept me with him (in Madeenah) for a year. He said, 'O' Aḥnaf, I have been testing you and I have seen that you are outwardly good, and I hope that you are as inwardly (good) as you are outwardly. We used to say that this ummah will be doomed by knowledgeable hypocrites.' Then 'Umar asked him, 'Do you know why I kept you here?' He explained to him that he had wanted to test him, then he appointed him as a governor."⁹⁸ Among the advice he gave to al-Aḥnaf was the following, 'O' Aḥnaf, one who laughs too much loses dignity; one who jokes too much loses respect; whoever does something a great deal becomes known for it; one who speaks a great deal makes mistakes; one who makes many mistakes loses his sense of dignity. Whoever loses his sense of dignity loses his fear of Allah, and whoever loses his fear of Allah is spiritually dead.'⁹⁹

2.1.13. Making the governor one of the people

It may be noted that in many cases, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) appointed some people as governors over their own people, if he saw

⁹⁷ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/128.

⁹⁸ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/142; *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 117.

⁹⁹ *Ṣifat aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/287.

that that served a purpose and if the man was qualified to be a governor. For example, he appointed Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali over his people Bajcelah¹⁰⁰ when he sent them to Iraq. Similarly, he appointed Salmân al-Fârisi over al-Madâ'in, Nâfi' ibn al-Ḥârith over Makkah and 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ over aṭ-Ṭâ'if. Perhaps there were specific goals behind that, which these people were more able to achieve than others.¹⁰¹

2.1.14. Letter of appointment

It was well known that when 'Umar had made his final selection of a governor and had consulted his consultants, he would write a document for the governor which was known as a contract of appointment. Many such texts of appointment by 'Umar have been narrated¹⁰², but most historians are agreed when 'Umar appointed an agent or governor, he would write a document for him which he would have witnessed by a number of the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr, and in which he would stipulate certain conditions.¹⁰³ If the person who had been nominated as a governor was absent, 'Umar would write a contract for him, in which he would instruct him to go to his new province. For example, he wrote to al-'Alâ' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami, his governor in Baḥrain, ordering him to go to Baṣrah and take over as governor there after 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân. When he dismissed one governor and appointed another, the new governor would take the letter which included the decree dismissing the first governor and appointing him in his stead. For example, 'Umar sent a letter with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari when he dismissed al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/142.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 407.

¹⁰³ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/144.

from his post as governor of Baṣra and appointed Abu Moosa in his stead.¹⁰⁴

2.1.15. Not seeking the help of a Christian with the affairs of the Muslims

When news of the conquest of Syria came to 'Umar, he said to Abu Moosa: "Call your scribe to read this to the people in the mosque." Abu Moosa said, "He cannot enter the mosque." 'Umar asked, "Why not? Is he *junub*?" He said, "No, rather he is a Christian." 'Umar rebuked him and said, "Do not bring them near when Allah has cast them away; do not honour them when Allah has humiliated them; do not trust them when Allah has stated that they are treacherous. I have forbidden you to employ people of the Book, for they accept bribes."¹⁰⁵

It was narrated that Usiqq¹⁰⁶ said: "I was a Christian slave of 'Umar's, and he said, 'Become Muslim so that we may appoint you over some of the Muslims' affairs, because we cannot appoint over their affairs one who is not one of them.' He set me free as he was dying and said, 'Go wherever you want.'¹⁰⁷

2.2. The most important characteristics of 'Umar's governors

Among the most important characteristics of 'Umar's governors were: strength of faith, Islamic knowledge, trust in Allah,

¹⁰⁴ Op. cit., 2/49.

¹⁰⁵ *Badā'i' as-Sālik*, 2/27.

¹⁰⁶ He was mentioned by Ibn Ḥajr in *al-Iṣābah*.

¹⁰⁷ *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawāb*, 2/514; *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/158.

exemplary conduct, sincerity, being qualified for the post, courage, chivalry, asceticism, love of sacrifice, humility, acceptance of advice, forbearance, patience, ambition, resolve, strong willpower, justice, the ability to solve problems, and other such characteristics. The most important of these were:

2.2.1. Asceticism (*Zuhd*)

Among the governors of 'Umar who were well known for their asceticism were: Sa'eed ibn 'Āmir ibn Ḥudhaym, 'Umayr ibn Sa'd, Salmân al-Fârîsi, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them all). The wives of some of his governors came to 'Umar and complained because of their husbands' asceticism. The wife of Mu'âdh ibn Jabal (ؓ) complained because 'Umar had sent Mu'âdh to distribute shares (from *bayt al-mâl*) to some tribes, so he shared them out until there was nothing left, then he came back empty-handed. His wife asked: "Where is your share, that agents usually get for their families?" He said, "Someone was watching me." She said, "You were trusted by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and by Abu Bakr; why did 'Umar send someone with you to watch you?" She went to her women and complained about 'Umar, and when news of that reached 'Umar, he summoned Mu'âdh and asked, "Did I send someone with you to watch you?" He said, "I couldn't find any other excuse to give her." 'Umar smiled and gave him something, and said, "Make her happy with this."¹⁰⁸

2.2.2. Humility

The governors at 'Umar's time were well known for their great humility, such that when people came to their lands, they could not

¹⁰⁸ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/53.

distinguish between them and the common folk. In their clothing, housing and mounts they were like the ordinary people, and they did not distinguish themselves from them in any way. An example of that is the story of Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh (رضي الله عنه). The Byzantines sent a man to him to negotiate with him, and when he came close to the Muslims, he could not tell Abu ‘Ubaydah apart from his companions; he did not know whether he was among them or not, and he did not feel that he was in the presence of a governor. He asked them: “O’ Arabs, where is your leader?” They said, “There he is.” He looked and he saw Abu ‘Ubaydah sitting on the ground, with a bow on his shoulder and examining an arrow that he held in his hand. The envoy asked him, “Are you the leader of these men?” He said, “Yes.” He then asked, “Then why are you sitting on the ground? Why don’t you sit on a cushion?” Abu ‘Ubaydah said, “Allah is not too shy to speak the truth, and I will tell you the truth about what you have said. I do not have any wealth; I own nothing but my horse, my weapon and my sword. Yesterday I needed some money and I had nothing, so I borrowed some money from this brother of mine who had some — meaning Mu‘ādh. He lent it to me. If I also had a rug or a cushion, I would not sit on it and exclude my bothers and companions; I would let my brother sit on it, for he may be better than me before Allah. We are slaves of Allah. We walk on the earth, we sit on the ground, we eat on the ground, we lie down on the ground, and that does not lower us in status before Allah at all. Rather Allah increases our reward thereby and raises us in status, and thus we show humility before our Lord.”¹⁰⁹

2.2.3. Piety

Many governors were keen to be relieved of the task that had been entrusted to them. ‘Utbah ibn Ghazwān asked ‘Umar to let him

¹⁰⁹ *Futooh ash-Shām* by al-Azdi, Pp. 122, 123.

off from the governorship of Baṣra, but he did not let him off.¹¹⁰ An-Nu'mān ibn Maqrān, who was the governor of Kaskar, asked 'Umar to let him off from being governor and let him go for jihad so that he could seek martyrdom.¹¹¹ Some of the *Ṣaḥābah* refused governor posts when 'Umar asked them to work as governors. Az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awām refused the governorship of Egypt when 'Umar offered it to him, saying, "O' Abu 'Abdullāh, would you like to be the governor of Egypt?" He said, "I have no need of that, rather let me go out as a *mujāhid* to help the Muslims."¹¹² Ibn 'Abbās refused the governorship of Homs when 'Umar offered it to him after the death of its governor.¹¹³

2.2.4. Respect for previous governors

The governors were distinguished by their respect for the governors who had preceded them. This may be noted in the majority of governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. For example, when Khâlid ibn al-Waleed came to Syria as governor over Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ and others, he refused to lead Abu 'Ubaydah in prayer. When 'Umar dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed from his post as commander of the army in Syria, and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah in his stead, Abu 'Ubaydah hid this news from Khâlid and did not tell him of that until another letter came from 'Umar. Then Khâlid found out the news and he rebuked Abu 'Ubaydah for not telling him.¹¹⁴ Dr. 'Abdul-'Azeez al-'Umari said: "During my research I could not find any governor who sought to humiliate or criticize those who had

¹¹⁰ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/54.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, p. 214.

¹¹³ *Al-Khirāj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 22, 23.

¹¹⁴ *Tāreekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/139, 140.

come before him. Rather in most cases they praised them in the first speech given.”¹¹⁵

2.3. Rights of governors

Undoubtedly the governors had various rights, some of which had to do with the people and some with the caliph, in addition to rights concerning the *bayt al-māl*. All of these rights, both intangible and financial, were primarily aimed at helping governors to fulfil their duties and serve Islam. The most important of these rights were:

2.3.1. Obedience so long as that did not involve sin

The people's duty to obey leaders and governors is confirmed in Islam. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«O' you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger [Muhammad], and those of you [Muslims] who are in authority. [And] if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.» (*Qur'an* 4: 59)

This verse states that it is obligatory to obey those in authority, which includes the governors who are implementing the commands of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted.¹¹⁶ Undoubtedly obedience to leaders and caliphs is limited to matters of obedience towards Allah; if they commit sin, there is no duty to obey them.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/55.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 2/56.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*.

2.3.2. Giving advice to governors

A man came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, is it better for me to speak the truth without fearing anyone except Allah, or should I just focus on myself?" He said, "One who has been appointed over any of the affairs of the believers should not fear anyone except Allah, but one who has not been given any such appointment should focus on himself and be sincere towards his leader."¹¹⁸

2.3.3. Conveying news to governors

The people are obliged to bring correct news to their governors and to be truthful in doing so as much as possible, whether it has to do with the general public or it is news of the enemy, or it has to do with the agents and employees of the governor, especially when that has to do with matters of war and news of the enemy, or with treacherous acts etc., on the basis of helping the governor to look after the interests of the ummah.¹¹⁹

2.3.4. Supporting the governor in his decisions

If his decisions support the public interest and he mostly needs the support of the caliph, then the caliph should support him. 'Umar (ؓ) was very enthusiastic about this principle, because he understood the importance of people showing respect to their governors. Even though 'Umar was strict with his governors, if he found out that there was some transgression against one of them, he would deal harshly with the aggressors, so that the governors would

¹¹⁸ *Al-Khirāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 15; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/57.

¹¹⁹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/57.

continue to be respected and would remain able to control the people, both the common folk and the elite.¹²⁰

2.3.5. The governor's right to engage in ijtihad

It is the governor's right to work out an answer in matters where there is room for ijtihad, especially in cases where Islam has not given a precise definition or in other matters where there are no instructions or guidelines from the caliph. One of 'Umar's governors in Syria worked out a system of distributing booty among the cavalry and infantry, and 'Umar allowed his ijtihad. It is well known that when Ibn Mas'ood was one of 'Umar's governors, he disagreed with 'Umar in more than one hundred matters of ijtihad.¹²¹

2.3.6. Respecting them after their dismissal

One of the rights of the governors was that they were to be respected after having been dismissed. When 'Umar dismissed Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah from his post as governor of Jordan, he told the people the reason for his dismissal and when Shurahbeel asked him, "Did you dismiss me because you are displeased with me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" he said, "No, I think well of you, but I want a man who is more capable than you."¹²² He dismissed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ (ؓ) from his post as governor of Koofah and perhaps he thought that in order to protect his dignity he should keep him away from people who used to criticize him with regard to his prayer, even though Sa'd most closely imitated the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) because of his knowledge of how the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed.

¹²⁰ Op. cit., 1/152.

¹²¹ *I'lām al-Muwaqq'ieen*, 2/218.

¹²² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/39.

So 'Umar dismissed him out of respect for him, so as to protect him from exposed to the ignorant.¹²³

2.3.7. Their material rights

The governors also had rights with regard to material matters, chief of which was the salaries on which they lived. Undoubtedly the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them), led by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, understood the importance of providing agents with an income, and acknowledged this as one of their rights, in addition to it being a means of making them independent of people, and thus not subject to their influence or attempts to bribe them.¹²⁴ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was keen for his agents to be honest and to have no desire for people's wealth, so he made them independent of means. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was aware that this is a serious matter and that in order to guarantee the honesty of his agents, it was essential to make them independent so that they would feel no need for people's wealth. There was a discussion between him and Abu 'Ubaydah, in which Abu 'Ubaydah said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: "You have made the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) indulge in worldly matters" — i.e., by using them as governors. 'Umar said, "O' Abu 'Ubaydah, If I do not seek the help of the pious in fulfilling my duties towards Allah, then whose help should I seek?" Abu 'Ubaydah said, "If you must do that, then make them independent of means so that they will not betray you"¹²⁵ — i.e., if you appoint them to any post, then be generous in giving them salaries, so that they will have no need to be dishonest and will have no need of people.

¹²³ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/59.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 2/60.

¹²⁵ *Al-Khirāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 122.

‘Umar gave to the commanders of armies and towns, and to all his agents, salaries that were reasonably sufficient, in return for their work (as much as they needed for their food and to take care of other issues).¹²⁶ He was keen that they should be honest concerning the public wealth that was under their control and he said to his agents: “As far as this wealth is concerned, I regard you and myself as being like one who is entrusted with the wealth of an orphan:

﴿... And whoever [amongst guardians] is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable [according to his labour]...﴾ (Qur’an 4: 6).”¹²⁷

‘Umar gave nearly all his agents a fixed salary, whether it was daily, monthly or annual. Some of these salaries are mentioned in the historical sources; in some cases the salary was given in the form of food, in other cases it was a set amount of money.¹²⁸

It is narrated that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) employed ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ood in charge of the judiciary and the *bayt al-māl*, ‘Uthmān ibn Ḥaneef in charge of what was irrigated by the Euphrates and ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir in charge of prayer and the troops. He gave them a sheep each day, giving half of it and its organs and feet to ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, because he was in charge of prayers and the troops; and he gave one quarter of it to ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ood and the other quarter to ‘Uthmān ibn Ḥaneef.

It is also narrated that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb gave ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ a salary of two hundred *dinārs* when he was governor of Egypt.¹²⁹ The salary of Salmān al-Fārisi when he was in charge of thirty thousand people in al-Madā’in was five thousand *dirhams*;

¹²⁶ *Al-Wilāyah ‘ala al-Buldān*, 1/149.

¹²⁷ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 2/694; *al-Wilāyah ‘ala al-Buldān*, 1/149.

¹²⁸ *Al-Wilāyah ‘ala al-Buldān*, 1/150.

¹²⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 4/261.

because of his asceticism he used to eat from what he earned by his own hands by making mats of palm-leaves, and he would give his salary in charity.¹³⁰

There are various other reports about the salaries that 'Umar gave to his governors; undoubtedly the variations mentioned in these reports stem from ongoing developments and changes during 'Umar's caliphate; it does not make sense to think that salaries would remain the same from the beginning to the end of his reign, since circumstances changed, prices varied and needs altered as the result of the spread of conquests and the increased income to the *bayt al-māl*.¹³¹ It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb gave Mu'āwiyah a salary of ten thousand *dinārs* per year for his work as governor of Syria, and 'Umar gave the leaders of armies and towns salaries that ranged between seven and nine thousand, according to what they needed of food and other things.¹³²

Some agents did not want to take these salaries in return for their work as governors for the Muslims, but 'Umar made them accept them. 'Umar said to one of his governors: "Did I not tell you to take care of some of the Muslims' affairs, and now when you are given money in return for your work, you object?" He said, "That's right." 'Umar said, "Why is that?" He said, "I have horses and slaves and I am well off. I want my work to be an act of charity for the Muslims." 'Umar said, "Do not do that. I wanted to do the same thing that you want. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would give me a payment and I would say, 'Give it to one who has more need of it than me.' But the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «'Take it and keep it, and give some in charity. Whatever of this money comes to you without you

¹³⁰ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā*, 1/547.

¹³¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/63.

¹³² *Al-Khirāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 50; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/63.

asking for it or hoping for it, take it, otherwise do not wish for it'.»¹³³

Whatever the case, the principle of giving salaries to agents and making them independent of the people is an Islamic principle which was enjoined by the Messenger (ﷺ) and followed by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after him. They made their agents independent so that they had no need of people's wealth, and they freed them to work in the interests of the Islamic state.¹³⁴

2.3.8. Treating agents and governors if they fell sick

Mu'ayqeeb, who was 'Umar's keeper of the *bayt al-mâl*, fell sick, and 'Umar asked for a remedy for him from everyone who had any medical knowledge. Then two men came from Yemen and he asked: "Do you have any remedy that you can offer this righteous man, for his pain is getting worse?" They said, "We cannot take away his illness, but we can give him some treatment that will stop it from getting any worse." 'Umar said, "It will be a blessing if it stops it from getting any worse." They said, "Does colocynth (bitter-apple) grow in your land?" He said, "Yes." They said, "Gather some of it for us." 'Umar issued orders and two large basketfuls were gathered for him. They went and cut each colocynth in two, then they made Mu'ayqeeb lie down. Each of them took one of his feet and started rubbing the bottom of the foot with the colocynth; when it wore out they picked up another and carried on. Then they let him go. 'Umar said, "His pain will not get worse." The narrator said: "By Allah, after that Mu'ayqeeb was fine and his pain did not get any worse, until he died."¹³⁵

¹³³ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/64; *al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah*, Muhammad Karad, p. 48.

¹³⁴ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/64.

¹³⁵ *Akhbâr 'Umar Ṭantâwiyât*, p. 341.

2.4. Duties of governors

Because of the position in which Allah had put them, and the heavy burden that was placed on their shoulders, 'Umar took care to remind them of the following duties:

2.4.1. Establishing religious affairs

Such as spreading Islam among the people, establishing regular prayer, protecting Islam and its fundamentals, building mosques, organizing the Ḥajj, and carrying out *ḥadd* punishments.

Spreading Islam

This period was a time of great conquests, which meant that governors had to strive to spread Islam in the conquered lands, with the help of the *Ṣaḥābah* who were with them.¹³⁶ At the time of 'Umar, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, who was a governor in Syria, wrote to him saying: "The people of Syria are many in number and have filled the cities; they need someone to teach them the Qur'an and Islam; help me with men who can teach them." So 'Umar sent five of the *fuqaha*' of the *Ṣaḥābah* to him.¹³⁷ 'Umar was well known for frequently saying, "By Allah, I do not send my governors to you to beat you and take your wealth; rather I send them to you to teach you your religion and the Sunnah of your Prophet."¹³⁸ 'Umar used to say to his governors: "We have not appointed you to shave the hair of the Muslims and to beat them; rather we have appointed you to establish regular prayer and teach them the Qur'an."¹³⁹ And 'Umar sent a number of teachers to the Islamic cities where they founded famous

¹³⁶ *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'een*, 2/247.

¹³⁷ *Siyar A'lām an-Nubala'*, 2/247.

¹³⁸ *As-Siyāsah ash-Shar'iyyah*, p. 150.

¹³⁹ *Naṣeehat al-Mulook* by al-Māwardi, p. 72; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/65.

schools, as we have mentioned above.

Establishing regular prayer

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) would write to his governors: "The most important of your affairs in my view is prayer; whoever prays regularly has protected his faith, but whoever neglects it is bound to be more negligent in other issues of faith."¹⁴⁰

'Umar also emphasized to his governors the importance of establishing regular prayer among the people, as he said: "We have appointed you to establish regular prayer and teach them knowledge and the Qur'an."¹⁴¹ 'Umar would state in his letters of appointment that So and so was in charge of the prayer and the troops, as in the document in which he appointed 'Ammār ibn Yāsir in charge of the prayer and the troops, and 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood in charge of the judiciary and the *bayt al-māl*.¹⁴² The *fuqaha'* who wrote about Islamic politics spoke of the importance of prayer with regard to the ruler, and how that had great significance in this world and in the Hereafter.¹⁴³

Protecting Islam and its fundamentals

'Umar was keen to protect Islam and its sound bases, which had been revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He strove hard to revive the Sunnah of the Messenger and to put an end to innovation. He also strove to respect the religion of Allah and revive the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He ordered that a man be exiled because he frequently provoked discussions about the ambiguous verses of the Qur'an.¹⁴⁴ He also enjoined *qiyām* (*Tarāweeh*) in

¹⁴⁰ *Aṭ-Ṭareeqah al-Ḥakamiyah*, p. 240; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/67.

¹⁴¹ *Naseehat al-Mulook*, p. 72.

¹⁴² *Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyah*, p. 33.

¹⁴³ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/67.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 2/68.

Ramaḍān, and issued similar instructions for all regions.¹⁴⁵ He wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "I have heard that some people under your care are using the call of the *Jāhiliyah* (calling on their people to attack other people); when this letter of mine reaches you, punish them severely both financially and physically, so that they will be scared even if they do not understand."¹⁴⁶

Building mosques

Some statistics state that 4000 mosques were built during 'Umar's caliphate in the Arab regions alone. The governors were well known for building mosques in the areas that they governed, such as 'Iyād ibn Ghanam, who founded a number of mosques in various parts of Arabia.¹⁴⁷

Organizing the Ḥajj

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the governors were responsible for organizing the pilgrims' affairs and ensuring the safety of those who were going for Ḥajj from their provinces. The governors appointed leaders for the Ḥajj caravans and stipulated the times of travel so that the pilgrims would not leave except with the governor's permission. The *fuqaha'* subsequently stipulated that organizing the pilgrims was one of the tasks of the governor.¹⁴⁸

Carrying out ḥadd punishments

'Amr ibn al-Āṣ carried out the *ḥadd* punishment on one of the sons of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in Egypt, then 'Umar himself punished him, and it was said that he died from the effects of that whipping.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/68.

¹⁴⁶ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 133.

¹⁴⁷ *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, p. 182; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/69.

¹⁴⁸ *Al-Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyah*, p. 33.

¹⁴⁹ *Manāqib 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 240, 242.

The governors carried out *qisās* executions without the permission of the caliph, until 'Umar wrote to them telling them: "Do not kill anyone without my permission."¹⁵⁰ So they began to ask 'Umar for permission to carry out executions before doing so. Carrying out *ḥadd* punishments is both a religious and a worldly matter that was taken as seriously by the caliphs and their governors as other rituals of Islam.¹⁵¹

2.4.2. Ensuring the people's security in their own lands

Maintaining security in the province was one of the most important duties of the governor. In order to achieve that, he would do a number of things, the most important of which was carrying out *ḥadd* punishments on sinners and evildoers in the case of crimes which threatened people's lives and property.¹⁵² In a letter which 'Umar (ﷺ) sent to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari he said: "Make the evildoers scared..."¹⁵³

Carrying out the duty of jihad against the enemy also played a major role in ensuring the security of the Islamic lands.¹⁵⁴

2.4.3. Jihad for the sake of Allah

If we examine the names of the governors from the beginning of Abu Bakr's caliphate until the caliphate of 'Umar we will see that they played a major role in the conquests; indeed they were sent as

¹⁵⁰ *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 521.

¹⁵¹ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/70.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 2/71.

¹⁵³ *Uyoon al-Akhhâr*, 1/11.

¹⁵⁴ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/71.

commanders to the lands that had not yet been conquered, and they conquered them and then set about organizing their affairs — such as the governors of Syria, Abu 'Ubaydah, 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyān and Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah, and the governors of Iraq such as al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam and others.¹⁵⁵

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, as well as being administrators, the governors were also *Mujâhideen* who faced the enemy; that did not distract them from doing the duties that had been assigned to them. The historical sources speak of the deeds of the governors in support of the jihad movement, the most important of which were:

- ❖ Sending volunteers for jihad
- ❖ Defending the province against the enemy: 'Umar said, "Your right over me is that I should protect your borders."
- ❖ Fortifying cities: 'Umar issued orders that fortresses should be built for the tribes who went to settle in Giza, in Egypt, fearing that surprise attacks might be launched against them.¹⁵⁶
- ❖ Seeking out news of the enemy: It is well known that Abu 'Ubaydah used to seek out precise information on Byzantine gatherings in Syria, and he would stage some tactical withdrawals on the basis of this information.¹⁵⁷
- ❖ Supplying horses to the regions: 'Umar implemented a policy throughout the state of supplying horses that were needed for jihad throughout the Muslim regions, according to need. He allocated some land to the people of Baṣra for the breeding and

¹⁵⁵ Op. cit., 2/72

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 1/77.

¹⁵⁷ *Al-Futooh* by Ibn A'tham, p. 215.

training of horses.¹⁵⁸ 'Umar also gave some land to some of the Muslims in Damascus for the care of horses, but they cultivated it instead, so he took it away from them and imposed a fine on them, for going against the purpose for which the land had been given to them, which was to breed horses. 'Umar had four thousand horses in Koofah, which were looked after by Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili and some of the people of Koofah, who trained them and took care of them. There was a similar set-up in Baṣra and in all the eight regions.¹⁵⁹ These horses were prepared to go to the immediate defence of the Islamic state when needed.¹⁶⁰

- ❖ Teaching children and preparing them for jihad: 'Umar wrote to the people of the regions, commanding them to teach their children horsemanship, swimming and archery. A boy was struck by an arrow during training in Syria and died. They wrote to 'Umar to tell him about that, but that did not deter him from his command to teach the children archery.¹⁶¹
- ❖ Checking on records of the troops: 'Umar paid special attention to the records of the troops, based on his belief that the people of the regions were most in need of such records, especially in the regions that were close to the enemy, for those were the regions that needed troops on an ongoing basis.¹⁶²

The governors were directly responsible for the military records, despite the fact that there were some other officials who took care of that matter. But because the governors were also commanders

¹⁵⁸ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/74.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 486.

¹⁶² *An-Nudhum al-Islâmiyah*, by Şubhi as-Şâlih, Pp. 488, 491.

of the troops, they were responsible for the military records in their lands, as deputies of the caliph.¹⁶³

- ❖ Implementing treaties: Some treaties were drawn up between Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ and some of the cities of Syria; the same was also true of governors in Iraq, such as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and others. In addition to that, the governors were also keen to protect the individual and communal rights of the *dhimmis* and to implement the treaties, in accordance with the commands of shari'ah.¹⁶⁴ 'Umar enjoined proper care of *ahl adh-dhimma* and said: "I urge you to take care of those who are under the protection of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and to protect them from their enemies, and not to burden them with more than they can bear."¹⁶⁵

2.4.4. Striving hard to ensure that people receive their stipends

'Umar said: "If I live, I would not leave the widows of Iraq in need of anyone after me." We should not forget the attitude of 'Umar during the year of ar-Ramādah, when famine was widespread. 'Umar mobilized all the resources of the state to resolve the crisis and feed the hungry. Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his *Sunan* that 'Umar spent on the people affected by the famine of ar-Ramādah, until rain fell and they started moving on from Madeenah. 'Umar went out to them, riding a horse, and watched as they were moving on, with tears flowing down his cheeks. A man from Banu Muḥārib ibn Khaṣṣah said: "I bear witness that you are relieved, and you are not the son of slave woman" — praising 'Umar. 'Umar said to him, "Woe to you! I

¹⁶³ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 20/77.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 2/77.

¹⁶⁵ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 133.

would accept this praise if I had spent my own wealth or the wealth of al-Khaṭṭāb, but I spent the wealth of Allah.”¹⁶⁶ And ‘Umar said, “Your right over me is that I will not collect anything of your taxes and I will not take any of the booty (*ḡayʾ*) that Allah has bestowed upon you, except in a proper manner. Your right over me is that if I collect something, I will not spend it except in the proper manner. Your right over me is that I will increase your stipends and provision, if Allah wills.”¹⁶⁷

The distribution of stipends at the time of ‘Umar was done regularly, in an organized manner. They were not given only to the inhabitants of the cities, rather the tribes in the desert were also given stipends. ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to go around to the tribes who lived near Madeenah and distribute their stipends to them himself, and he wrote to some of his governors telling them to give the people their stipends and provision. ‘Umar wrote saying that this was their booty that Allah had bestowed upon them; it did not belong to ‘Umar or to the family of ‘Umar, so divide it among the people.¹⁶⁸

‘Umar did not stop at making sure that people got their share, rather he also strove to ensure that people had enough food. During one of his visits to Syria, Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ came to him and said: “O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, by Allah, the commanders of your army in Syria do not eat anything but the flesh of fowls and fine bread, but the common folk of the Muslim do not eat such things.” ‘Umar asked them, “Is what Bilāl is saying true?” Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyan said to him, “O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, the prices in our country are low and we can buy that which Bilāl mentioned here for what it costs to feed our families in the Ḥijāz.” ‘Umar (ﷺ) said, “By Allah, I will not

¹⁶⁶ *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 6/357; *Mawsoo’at Fiqh ‘Umar*, p. 135.

¹⁶⁷ *Mawsoo’at Fiqh ‘Umar*, p. 137.

¹⁶⁸ *Al-Wilāyah ‘ala al-Buldān*, 2/77.

leave until you guarantee for me the provision of the Muslims each month." Then he said, "See how much is sufficient for a man to get the food he likes." They said, "Two measures of wheat and enough olive oil and vinegar to go with it, at the beginning of each month." So they guaranteed that to him, then he said, "O' Muslims, this is in addition to your stipends. If your agents fulfil what I have allocated to you, and they give it to you every month, that is what I want. But if they do not do that, then tell me, so that I can dismiss them and appoint others in their stead."¹⁶⁹

'Umar was also keen to distribute food throughout the regions, check on the markets and prevent hoarding, and his governors also checked on the markets. He also commanded merchants to travel and bring what the Muslims needed and make it available in their markets.¹⁷⁰ 'Umar and his governors did not stop at securing the food supply and checking on the markets only, rather the issue of accommodation and the distribution thereof was another task that was entrusted to the governors of towns and cities. When the new cities (*amsār*) were founded and laid out, he distributed land to the people to live in, in Koofah and Baṣra¹⁷¹ and in al-Fustāt. The governors also supervised the division of houses in conquered cities such as Homs, Damascus, Alexandria, etc.¹⁷²

2.4.5. Appointment of agents and employees

The appointment of agents and employees was another task that was allocated to the governors in many cases. A province usually consisted of a major city and other cities and regions that belonged to

¹⁶⁹ *Futooḥ ash-Shām* by al-Azdi, p. 257; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/78.

¹⁷⁰ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 2/749.

¹⁷¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/79.

¹⁷² *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balādhuri, Pp. 143, 224.

the province. It needed its affairs to be organized, so the governors appointed agents and employees to represent them in those areas, whether they were local leaders or collectors of taxes (*kharāj*). These appointments were usually made by agreement between the caliph and the governor.¹⁷³

2.4.6. Taking care of *ahl adh-dhimmah*

Taking care of *ahl adh-dhimmah*, respecting treaties with them, fulfilling their rights as granted by shari'ah, asking them to do their duties towards the Muslims, checking on their situation, restoring their rights in accordance with shari'ah when they had been wronged, were all duties of the governor. The caliphs set specific conditions for *ahl adh-dhimmah* in most cases before entering into treaties with them, then they guaranteed their rights and asked them to adhere to those conditions.¹⁷⁴

2.4.7. Consulting people of wisdom in the province and honouring prominent people

'Umar emphasized the importance of consulting wise people in their lands. The governors implemented this principle and held gatherings where they would consult the people. He commanded his governors to continually consult the people of wisdom¹⁷⁵, and he asked them to honour people in accordance with their status. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "I have heard that you allow all kinds of people to come to you. When this letter of mine reaches you, allow the noble people and people of the Qur'an, piety and

¹⁷³ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/79.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 2/80.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*.

religious commitment to come in first. When they have taken their sets, then allow the common folk to come in.” He also wrote to him saying: “People refer their matters to the prominent people, so honour the prominent people, for it is enough for the weak Muslim to be treated fairly with regard to judgement and division of wealth.”¹⁷⁶

2.4.8. Looking at the developmental needs of the province

During his governorship, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ dug a channel in response to a request from some of the Persian leaders in the interests of the farmers in the area.¹⁷⁷ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari commanding him to dig a channel for the people of Baṣra, and Abu Moosa dug a channel four parasangs long to bring water to the inhabitants of Baṣra.¹⁷⁸ When founding the famous cities of Koofah, Baṣra and al-Fuṣṭāṭ 'Umar's governors also paid attention to laying out streets, distributing land, building mosques, securing water sources and other public interests of these cities. They also encouraged people to settle in areas that were less desirable because of their proximity to the enemy or for other reasons. They offered them incentives and land grants to encourage them to remain there. 'Umar and 'Uthmān did that in Antioch (Antakiya) and in some parts of Mesopotamia.

2.4.9. Paying attention to the social affairs of the inhabitants of the provinces

When delegations came to 'Umar (ﷺ), he would ask them about their governor and they would say good things. He would ask

¹⁷⁶ *Naṣeeḥat al-Mulook* by al-Māwirdī, p. 207; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 134.

¹⁷⁷ *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, p. 273; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 872.

¹⁷⁸ *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, Pp. 351, 352.

them, Does he visit the sick? And they would say yes. He would ask them, Does he visit slaves when they are sick? And they would say yes. He would ask, How does he treat the weak? Do they sit at his door (waiting to be admitted)? If they said no to any of these questions, he would dismiss that governor.¹⁷⁹ 'Umar would dismiss a governor if he heard that he did not visit the sick and did not admit the weak.¹⁸⁰ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was also keen for his agents to appear humble before the people, so that the people would feel that the governor was one of them and was not different from them. 'Umar stipulated that his governors should ride mounts and wear clothes of the same standard as the people, and he forbade them to have doorkeepers and gatekeepers.¹⁸¹

2.4.10. Not discriminating between Arabs and non-Arabs

The governors were obliged to treat people equally and not to differentiate between Arabs and other Muslims. Some people came to a governor of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and he gave to the Arabs and not to the non-Arabs. 'Umar wrote to him saying: "It is sufficient evil for a man to despise his Muslim brother." According to another report, he wrote to him saying: "Why did you not treat them equally?"¹⁸²

There are a number of other moral duties which are enjoined by Islam, such as fulfilling covenants, being sincere in one's work, remembering that Allah is always watching in everything that one

¹⁷⁹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/82.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² *Al-Wathā'iq as-Siyāsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 523.

does, being prepared to cooperate with others in all good and righteous deeds, and the obligation to be sincere towards Allah, His Messenger, the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk, for this is in the interests of all.¹⁸³ In addition to adhering to these obligations, the governor was also required to propagate them among the people in his province, through his *khuṭbahs*, writing, preaching and dealings. The governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs — in general — were fine examples of these moral attitudes and duties, both in personal matters and in the way in which they interacted with the people.¹⁸⁴

2.5. Translation in the provinces and the working hours of the governors

2.5.1. Translation in the provinces

Translation was regarded as a means of helping the governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and there was a real need for it in many cases. 'Umar asked his governors in Iraq to send to Madeenah some of the Persian chieftains so that he could discuss the *kharāj* with them. They sent him some chieftains and a translator along with them.¹⁸⁵ It is reported that al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah knew a little of the Persian language, and he translated for 'Umar and al-Hormuzān in Madeenah.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ *An-Nadhariyāt as-Siyāsiyah al-Islāmiyah* by Muhammad Ḍiya' ar-Rees, Pp. 307, 308.

¹⁸⁴ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/85.

¹⁸⁵ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 40, 41; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/105.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Knowledge of translation is something that was well known in the Islamic state, at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and before that. If we remember that the *kharāj* records were not written in Arabic, then we will realize the extent of the need for translators in the provinces who could translate in cases of *kharāj* and other matters. The agents in charge of the *kharāj* were mostly Persians or non-Arabs. The spread of newcomers to the faith in the various Islamic regions also made the need for translation a top priority in judicial and other matters, as did the need for negotiations between the leaders of the conquests, who were mostly governors, and the peoples of the conquered lands.¹⁸⁷

2.5.2. Working hours of the governors

There was no precise definition of the working hours at the time of 'Umar. The caliph and his governors worked at all hours, and they did not have doorkeepers. Some of them used to patrol at night, and their example in that regard was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb himself, who was famous for walking about at night on his patrols of Madeenah. The people would meet the governor at various times, asking him to deal with their affairs, and they did not find anyone who would prevent them from entering to meet the governor on the grounds that this was not the time for work. The governors were well known for their eagerness to finish tasks straight away, with no delay. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote concerning this to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, saying: "Do not put off today's work until tomorrow, lest work accumulate and you achieve nothing."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/104.

¹⁸⁸ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 129.

3. 'Umar's Checking on his Governors

3.1. Checking on governors

'Umar did not stop at selecting the best men to work as his agents and governors, rather he strove hard to follow up on them and check on them after appointing them, to be sure that they were doing well, and for fear that they might deviate or drift away. His slogan was: "It is better for me to dismiss one governor every day than to leave a wrongdoer in place for even one minute."¹⁸⁹ And he said: "Any governor of mine who wrongs anyone and I hear of his wrongdoing, if I do not change him, then I have wronged him."¹⁹⁰ One day he said to those who were around him: "What do you think, if I were to appoint over you the best one I could find, then command him to be just, would I have done what is required of me?" They said, "Yes." He said, "No, not until I see how he does, and whether he will do what I have commanded him or not."¹⁹¹

'Umar was very strict in checking on his governors and agents. His method of administration was to give his governors free rein in local affairs, to limit them with regard to public affairs, and then to watch and see how they dealt with things. He had a secret service which watched the governors and the people. The historical sources tell us that something like the modern-day intelligence services existed at the time of 'Umar and that he knew as much about those agents who were far away from him as those who slept with him in the same room. There was no region or area in which there was a

¹⁸⁹ *An-Naḍḥm al-Islāmiyah*, by Ṣubḥī aṣ-Ṣālīḥ, p. 89; *al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah*, 215.

¹⁹⁰ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 56; *al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah*, 215.

¹⁹¹ *Al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 215.

governor or army commander, but there were eyes constantly watching him, and the words uttered in the east and the west reached 'Umar every morning and evening. You can see that in the letters that he wrote to his governors and agents, and some agents would accuse the closest people to them of spying for 'Umar.¹⁹² 'Umar had numerous means of checking on his governors, which included the following:

3.1.1. Asking the governors to enter Madeenah by day

'Umar asked his governors, when they came to Madeenah, to enter the city by day, and not at night, so that the wealth and booty that they brought could be seen and so that it would be easy to ask them questions and bring them to account.¹⁹³

3.1.2. Asking the governors to send delegations

'Umar asked the governors to send delegations from the local people so that he could ask them about their lands and the *kharāj* that had been imposed on them, so as to ensure that they were not being wronged, and he asked them to give their testimony concerning the situation in their lands. The *kharāj* of Koofah was brought to him by ten of its people, and the *kharāj* of Baṣra was brought by a similar number. When they appeared before him, they testified by Allah that it was good (*ḥalāl*) wealth, and that no Muslim or *mu'āḥad* had been wronged with regard to it.¹⁹⁴ This was sufficient to prevent governors from wronging the people. If that had happened, the delegates would have complained to 'Umar and told him about it. 'Umar usually held

¹⁹² *At-Tāj fee Akhlāq al-Mulook*, p. 168.

¹⁹³ *Fann al-Hukm*, p. 174.

¹⁹⁴ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 124; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/157.

discussions with the delegates and asked them about their lands and about the governors and how they treated them.¹⁹⁵

3.1.3. Mail service

'Umar sent mail to the governors in the various regions, and when the mail carrier wanted to return to Madeenah, he would issue orders that the call be given to the people, asking whether anyone wanted to send a letter to the caliph, so that he could carry it back to him without any interference from the local governor. The mail carrier himself did not know anything about the letters or their contents, thus the people had free rein to send complaints of wrongdoing to 'Umar himself without the governor or his men knowing anything about it. When the mail carrier reached 'Umar, he would give the letters he had to 'Umar, and 'Umar would read them and see what they said.¹⁹⁶

3.1.4. The general inspector (Muhammad ibn Maslamah)

Muhammad ibn Maslamah al-Anṣārī was appointed by 'Umar to check on the governors and to examine any complaints that were made against them. The role of Muhammad ibn Maslamah was that of a general inspector in the caliphate. He checked on how the governors were doing their job and brought to account those who were falling short. 'Umar sent him to check on the senior governors¹⁹⁷, investigate complaints, to meet the people and listen to them, and to transmit their opinions of their governors directly to 'Umar. Muhammad ibn Maslamah also had some helpers.

¹⁹⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/157.

¹⁹⁶ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 2/761.

¹⁹⁷ *Al-Anṣār fee al-'Asr ar-Rāshidi*, Pp 123-126.

3.1.5. The Ḥajj season

The Ḥajj season provided 'Umar with an opportunity to receive news about the people and the governors. He made it a season for reflecting, checking and seeking opinions from all regions, where those with complaints about wrongdoing would gather, and the "watchers" whom 'Umar had sent to all regions of his state to check on his agents and governors would report back to him. The agents themselves would also come to give an account of their actions. The season of Ḥajj was like a "general assembly" that was as refined as any general assembly in any era.¹⁹⁸ During the Ḥajj season, 'Umar would give a summary of the governors' duties to the people, then he said: "Whoever has been treated differently than that, let him stand up." No one of the people present stood up, on that occasion, except one man, which is indicative of the justice of those governors and how pleased the people were with them. That man said, "Your governor So and so gave me one hundred lashes." 'Umar asked the governor and did not receive any satisfactory answer, so he said to the man, "Get up and retaliate (*qiṣâs*)." 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ stood up and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, if you do that it will happen a lot and it will become something regular after you are gone." 'Umar said, "How can I not settle scores when I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) allowing others to settle scores with him?" 'Amr said, "Let us make a deal with him." He said, "Here he is, make a deal with him." So the agent gave him two hundred *dinârs*, two *dinârs* for each blow with the whip.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ 'Abqariyat 'Umar by al-'Aqqâd, p. 82; *ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah* by Dr. Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 138.

¹⁹⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/222.

3.1.6. Regular inspections of the regions

Before he was killed, 'Umar was thinking of travelling around the provinces himself, to check on the governors and see the situation of the people and make sure that the affairs of his vast state were in order. 'Umar said: "If I live, *insha' Allāh*, I will travel among the people for one year, for I know that the people have needs that I do not hear about. Their agents do not tell me about them and they cannot reach me. So I will go to Syria and stay there for two months, then I will go to Mesopotamia and stay there for two months, then I will go to Koofāh and stay there for two months, then I will go to Baṣra and stay there for two months, and by Allah, what a good year it will be."²⁰⁰

'Umar managed to carry out some of his plan, particularly in Syria, as he went there several times and checked on the situation and entered the houses of the governors and agents²⁰¹ to check closely on them. He entered the house of Abu 'Ubaydah and saw how simply he lived, and there took place a discussion between 'Umar and the wife of Abu 'Ubaydah, in which she blamed 'Umar for the simple and ascetic life they were living. He also visited the house of Khālid ibn al-Waleed, where he found that he had nothing that would attract attention except his weapons which he was busy repairing.

When visiting these people, he would make surprise visits. He took with him a man who would knock at the door of the governor and ask for permission for himself and the one who was with him to enter, without telling them that it was 'Umar. When 'Umar entered the house, he would examine it and check on its furnishings.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/18; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/161.

²⁰¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/161.

²⁰² *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/837.

'Umar heard that Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân ate a variety of foods, so he waited until it was the dinner hour, then he asked permission to enter and meet Yazeed. When he saw his food, he told him not to be extravagant with regard to food.²⁰³ 'Umar did not stop at checking on them by means of these visits, rather he used another method, which was sending some wealth to these governors and sending people to watch them and see how they disposed of it. He sent five hundred *dinârs* to Abu 'Ubaydah, and Abu 'Ubaydah distributed the entire amount. His wife used to say: "By Allah, the arrival of *dinârs* did us more harm than good." Abu 'Ubaydah went to a worn-out garment on which we used to pray and cut it into pieces, then he wrapped some of those *dinârs* in each piece and sent it to the poor, until it was all gone.²⁰⁴

'Umar did the same thing with other governors during that visit to Syria. He did not only check on his governors during his journey, rather he would also bring them to Madeenah and appoint someone to watch what they ate and drank, and what they wore, and he would also do that himself.²⁰⁵

3.1.7. The archive or records of the caliphate

'Umar was extremely keen to preserve the documents pertaining to the governors and to the caliphate in general. He was most concerned with preserving the treaties that the governors had drawn up with the peoples of the conquered lands, lest anyone be wronged. It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb had a box or chest in which he kept every treaty that had been drawn up between him and others. We may call this chest the "archive" or records of the

²⁰³ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/162.

²⁰⁴ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/837.

²⁰⁵ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/162.

caliphate. The governors also had chests in which they kept their papers and documents, to refer to them when necessary and so that there would not be any confusion about any matter.²⁰⁶

3.2. Complaints from the people about the governors

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) would investigate complaints from the people about the governors himself. He was keen to check matters and he would consult the wise and knowledgeable people around him, then issue his commands to reward or punish those who deserved it, whether they were agents or common folk.²⁰⁷ There follow some examples of complaints against governors and how 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) dealt with them.

3.2.1. The complaint of the people of Koofah against Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (رضي الله عنه)

Some of the people of Koofah, led by al-Jarrāḥ ibn Sinân al-Asadi got together and complained to 'Umar about their governor Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (رضي الله عنه). That happened at a time when the Magians were gathering in Nahawand to attack the Muslims, but this group was not deterred by what was facing the Muslims. Sa'd was just and compassionate towards the people; he was strong and determined against the people of falsehood and the troublemakers, and kind towards the people of truth and obedience. But despite that these people, who could not bear the rule of truth, started to stir up trouble and they wanted to achieve some of their whims and desires.

²⁰⁶ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 1/163.

²⁰⁷ *Al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, 223.

They chose a time to make their complaint when they thought that ‘Umar would have no choice but to listen to them, because the Muslims were preparing for a decisive battle which required that there be unity among the Muslims. They knew how deeply concerned ‘Umar was for the Muslims to be united at all times, especially in such circumstances, so they hoped they would achieve what they wanted. The caliph responded to their request and investigated their complaint, even though he knew that they were evil people who followed their whims and desires. He did not hide what he thought of them; rather he told them bluntly and explained to them that the fact that he thought they were wronging their governor and making false accusations against him would not stop him from investigating the matter. He proved to them why he thought that their intentions were bad when he said: “The fact that your intentions are bad is proven by your choice of time, when your enemy is mobilizing its forces. By Allah, that will not stop me from investigating your case, even if the enemy attacks you.”²⁰⁸

‘Umar sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah, at the time when the people were preparing to do battle with the Persians and the Persians were preparing to attack the Muslims. Muhammad ibn Maslamah was the one who was appointed to investigate complaints made against agents and governors at the time of ‘Umar. Muhammad came to Sa’d and went around Koofah with him, whilst the Muslims were mobilizing to head for Nahawand. Sa’d took him around to the mosques of Koofah, and he did not ask anyone about him secretly, for it was not their habit to conduct investigations in secret at that time.²⁰⁹ This shows us the method used by the *Ṣaḥābah* in investigating disputes that arose between people in charge and those who were under them. The investigation was conducted openly, in

²⁰⁸ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/103.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

the presence of the person in charge and those for whom he was responsible. He did not stop at any mosque and ask the people about Sa'd but they said, "We know nothing but good about him and we do not want anyone else (as governor). We will not say anything against him and we will not help anyone against him," except those who were on the side of al-Jarrāḥ ibn Sinān and his companions; they kept quiet and did not say anything bad, because they had no justification for doing so, but they deliberately did not praise him. Then they came to Banu 'Abs. Muhammad said: "I adjure by Allah any man who knows the truth to speak it." Usamah ibn Qatadah said, "By Allah, if you adjure us, I would say that he does not divide equally, and he is not just towards the people, and he does not lead us in war." Sa'd said, "By Allah, if he says that he is lying and showing off. May his sight be taken away, may the number of his dependents increase, and may he be exposed to temptation." He went blind, he was given ten daughters, and whenever he heard of any woman he would go to her and pursue her. When he was caught, he said, "The prayer of Sa'd, the blessed man." Then Sa'd began to pray against them, saying: "O' Allah, if they are rebelling out of arrogance and falsely, then strike them with Your calamities." Then they were struck with calamities. Al-Jarrāḥ was killed with the sword on the day when they rebelled against al-Ḥasan ibn 'Ali and tried to assassinate him in Sabāṭ. Qabeesah was struck with rocks and died. Arbad was killed by a blow with a sword handle. This report gives us examples of how Allah supports His pious friends, as He answered the prayer of Sa'd against those who had wronged him and they were all stricken as the result of his *du'ā'* against them. It also shows us how Allah's response to the *du'ā'* of Sa'd and others like him is a kind of divine care for the pious close friends of Allah. The fact that these people against whom Sa'd prayed met with a bad end indicates that evil was firmly established in their souls, which led them to that bad end. Sa'd defended himself and said: "I was the first man to shed blood among

the *mushrikeen*, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned both of his parents when he spoke of me, and he had not done so for anyone before me — that was when he said to him on the day of Uhud: «‘Shoot, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you!’» — I remember when I was one of only five in Islam, and Banu Asad are claiming that I do not pray properly or that the hunt has distracted me.” Muhammad ibn Maslamah went with him and with them to ‘Umar and when they came to him, he told them the story. ‘Umar turned to Sa’d and asked: “O’ Sa’d, woe to you, how do you pray?” Sa’d said, “I make the first two *rak’ahs* long and the last two *rak’ahs* short.” ‘Umar said, “That is what I thought.” Then ‘Umar (ﷺ) said, “Were it not for the need for caution, the way to deal with them would be clear.” Then he asked, “Whom do you appoint as your successor in Koofah, O’ Sa’d?” He said, “‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Utbân.” ‘Umar approved and appointed him as governor.²¹⁰

‘Umar’s words, “Were it not for the need for caution, the way to deal with them would be clear” mean that they were ignorant wrongdoers, and it was obvious that Sa’d was innocent of what they attributed to him, but caution for the sake of the ummah necessitated warding off *fitnah* and nipping it in the bud, before it got any worse and led to trouble, division and maybe fighting. If the accused person was innocent of what was attributed to him, then nothing would harm him once he had been proven innocent of the accusations against him. They understood governorship as a burden, not an opportunity; it was a duty for which they hoped for reward from Allah. Being appointed in charge of any of the Muslims’ affairs is a kind of righteous deed for the one who fears Allah and seeks His pleasure and the Hereafter. If this deed becomes a source of *fitnah*, wisdom dictates that one should not continue in it, as was the case here. This

²¹⁰ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/104.

is what 'Umar did when he relieved Sa'd of his post and appointed his deputy who was trusted by Sa'd.²¹¹ 'Umar kept Sa'd in Madeenah and approved of the man whom Sa'd nominated to succeed him in Koofah. Thus Sa'd became one of 'Umar's consultants in Madeenah.²¹² Then he nominated him as one of the six candidates for the caliphate when he was stabbed, and he urged the caliph who succeeded him to appoint Sa'd as a governor, and said: "I did not dismiss him for something bad, but I feared that his reputation might be tarnished because of that."²¹³

3.2.2. Complaints against 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, the governor of Egypt

'Umar kept a strict watch on 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, and the caliph intervened in the affairs of the province on occasion. When 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ had a *minbar* made for himself, he wrote to him, saying: "I have heard that you have acquired a *minbar* to raise yourself above the heads of the Muslims. Is it not sufficient for you that you stand with the Muslims at your feet? I insist that you should break it."²¹⁴

'Amr ibn al-Āṣ feared 'Umar's checking on him. He knew how keen 'Umar was that justice should be established among the people, and that the limits set by shari'ah be adhered to, so he did his utmost to ensure that no news reached 'Umar but that which would please him. An example of that occurred when 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and another man drank something without realizing that it was an intoxicant, and they became intoxicated. Then they came to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ and asked him to carry out the *ḥadd*

²¹¹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi* by al-Ḥumaydi, 11/222.

²¹² *Dawr al-Hijāz fee al-Hayāt as-Siyāsiyah*, p. 257.

²¹³ *Tāreekh at-Tabari*, 5/225.

²¹⁴ *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbāruḥā*, p. 92.

punishment on them. 'Amr rebuked them and threw them out, and 'Abdur-Raḥmān said to him: "If you do not do it, I will tell my father!" 'Amr said, "I realized that if I did not carry out the *ḥadd* punishment on them, 'Umar would be angry and would dismiss me." Then 'Amr flogged them in front of the people, but he shaved their heads inside his house, and the usual procedure was to shave the head at the same time as flogging, in front of the people. Then he received a letter from 'Umar, rebuking him for not shaving their heads in front of the people, in which he said: "You flogged 'Abdur-Raḥmān inside your house and you shaved his head inside your house, although you knew that this was against my wishes! 'Abdur-Raḥmān is one of the men under your authority, and you should treat him as you would treat any other Muslim. But you said, he is the son of the caliph, although you know that I do not compromise for anyone with regard to a duty that is owed to Allah."²¹⁵

Other complaints were also made against 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ during his governorship; some of them came from his Muslim troops, and some came from the Egyptians, which led 'Umar to summon 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ on several occasions, to rebuke him and sometimes to punish him for what he had done. An example of that was when one of the Egyptians complained that a son of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ had struck him with a whip, which led 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to summon 'Amr and his son. He then commanded the Egyptian to settle the score with the son of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, and he said to him: "If you had hit his father 'Amr, we would not have stopped you." Then 'Umar turned to 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and spoke his famous words: "When did you enslave people whose mothers bore them free?"²¹⁶

Another incident which comes under this heading was when one of the soldiers complained about 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ who had

²¹⁵ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/841.

²¹⁶ *Al-Wilāyah ʿala al-Buldān*, 1/81.

accused him of hypocrisy. 'Umar sent a letter ordering that 'Amr should be made to sit before the people and be whipped by this man if the testimony of witnesses proved that what this soldier said was true. The soldier's complaint was proven by testimony, that 'Amr had accused him of being a hypocrite. The people tried to stop the soldier from hitting 'Amr, and to accept money in compensation instead, but he refused that. When the man stood by 'Amr to hit him he said, "Is there anyone who will stop me from hitting you?" 'Amr said, "No, go ahead with what you have been commanded to do." He said, "I let you off."²¹⁷

3.2.3. Complaints against Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, the governor of Baṣra

It was narrated from Jareer ibn 'Abdullāh al-Bajali that a man who had a loud voice and was very tough with the enemy in battle was with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. They got some booty and Abu Moosa gave him part of his share, but he insisted on having it all. Abu Moosa gave him twenty lashes and shaved his head. The man gathered up his hair and went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and entered to meet him. Jareer said: "I was the closest of the people to 'Umar. He took out his hair and threw it at 'Umar's chest, then he said, "Were it not for the Hellfire." 'Umar said, "That's right, were it not for the Hellfire." He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I had a loud voice and I was very tough with the enemy in battle," and he told him his story. He then said, "Abu Moosa gave me twenty lashes and shaved my head, and he thinks that no one can settle the score with him." 'Umar (ؓ) said, "If all the people were as firm as this man, that would be dearer to me than all the booty that Allah has granted us. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa saying: "Peace be upon you. So and so has told me

²¹⁷ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/807, 808; there is some interruption in its isnad.

such and such. If you did that before a group of people, then I urge you to sit before a group of people so that he may settle the score with you. If you did that with no people around, then I urge you to sit where there are no people around and let him settle the score with you." The man came, and the people said to him, "Let him off." He said, "No, by Allah, I would not let him off for the sake of any man." When Abu Moosa sat for him to settle the score, the man raised his head and looked up at the heavens, then he said, "O' Allah, I have let him off."²¹⁸

It was narrated that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: "We were with 'Umar on a journey when he saw a man rushing. He said, 'This man is looking for us.' The man came and wept, and 'Umar wept, and asked, 'What is the matter with you?' He said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I drank alcohol, and Abu Moosa hit me and blackened my face and paraded me before the people, and told the people not to sit with me. I thought of taking my sword and striking Abu Moosa with it, or of coming to you and asking you to send me to a land where I am not known, or of going to live in the land of *shirk*.' 'Umar wept and said, 'I would not like you to go and live in the land of *shirk*, even if I have such and such in return.' And he said, 'If you are one of those who drank alcohol, then the people drank alcohol during the *Jāhiliyah*.' Then 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa, saying, 'So and so came to me and told me such and such. When this letter of mine reaches you, tell the people to sit with him and to mix with him. If he repents, then accept his testimony.' And he gave him some clothes and ordered that he be given two hundred *dirhams*."²¹⁹ According to another report, he said, 'So and so the son of So and so from Banu Tameem has told me such and such. By Allah, if you do that again I will certainly blacken your face and parade you before the people. If

²¹⁸ *Mahd as-Ṣawāb*, 2/467, its isnad is *ḥasan*.

²¹⁹ *Mahd as-Ṣawāb*, 2/553.

you want to know whether I mean what I say, then do it again. And tell the people to eat with him and sit with him, and if he repents then accept his testimony.' And 'Umar gave him a suit of clothes and a mount, and gave him two hundred *dirhams*."²²⁰ This story shows us how keen 'Umar was that none of his governors should overstep the mark in carrying out *ḥadd* punishments on sinners.²²¹

3.2.4. The complaints of the people of Homs against Sa'eed ibn 'Āmir

Khâlid ibn Ma'dân said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb appointed Sa'eed ibn 'Āmir al-Jumaḥi over us in Homs. When 'Umar came to Homs he said: "O' people of Homs, how do you find your governor?" and they complained about him. The people of Homs were known as "the little Koofah" because of their complaints about their governors. They said: "We have four complaints about him. He does not come out to us until late in the day." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said, "He does not respond to anyone at night." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said, "There is one day in the month when he does not come out to us." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said: "Sometimes he passes out." 'Umar gathered them and him together and said, "O' Allah, do not prove me wrong in my view of him this day," then he began to judge the matter. He asked them in front of him, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "He does not come out to us until the late in the day." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "By Allah, I did not want to mention it. My family has no servant, so I make dough and wait for it to rise, then I bake my

²²⁰ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Hayât al-Fârooq*, p. 134, its isnad is *ḥasan*.

²²¹ *Ibid*, p. 133.

bread, then I do *wuḍoo'*, then come out to them." 'Umar asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "He does not respond to anyone at night." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "By Allah, I did not want to mention it. I have set aside the day for them and the night for Allah." 'Umar then asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "There is one day in the month when he does not come out to us." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "I have no servant to wash my garment for me and I have no garment other than this, so I wait for it to dry, then I put it on and come out to them at the end of the day." 'Umar asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "Sometimes he passes out." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "I witnessed the killing of Khubayb al-Anṣârî in Makkah when Quraysh cut his flesh and tied him to a tree trunk and said, 'Would you like Muhammad to be in your place?' He said, 'By Allah, I would not like to be with my family and my children and see Muhammad pricked by a thorn.' Then he called out, 'O Muhammad!' Whenever I remember that day and how I failed to help him at that time, when I was a *mushrik* and did not believe in Allah the Almighty, I think that Allah will never forgive me for that sin. Then I pass out." 'Umar said, "Praise be to Allah Who has not proved my instinct wrong." He sent him with a thousand dinars and said, "Use it to help yourself," and he Sa'eed distributed it.²²²

3.2.5. Dismissal of an agent who made fun of one of the people

Qays ibn Abi Ḥâzim (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated: " 'Umar employed a man of the Anṣâr who stayed with the leader of the people of al-Ḥeerah, 'Amr ibn Ḥayyân ibn Baqeelah. He brought

²²² *Hilyah al-Awliya'*, 1/245; *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 152.

him food and drink and whatever he wanted, then he (the Anṣārī) started to joke a great deal. He called him and wiped his hand on his beard. Then 'Amr ibn Ḥayyān went to 'Umar and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I served Chosroes and Caesar and I was never intimidated in the manner in which I was intimidated under your reign." 'Umar asked, "How is that?" He said, "Your agent stayed with me and we brought him food and drink and whatever he wanted, then he started to joke a great deal. He called me and wiped his hand on my beard. 'Umar sent for him and said, "What is this? He brought you food and drink and whatever you wanted, then you called him and wiped your hand on his beard? By Allah, were it not that I do not want to set a precedent, I would have left a single hair of your beard without pulling it out. Now go, for by Allah you will never do any work for me."²²³

3.3. Punishments that were carried out on governors at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ)

As a result of 'Umar's watching his governors, he noticed some mistakes that the governors made, so he disciplined and punished them for these mistakes. His methods of disciplining the governors varied according to the situation and what the caliph thought best. Among the most important methods he used were the following:

3.3.1. Settling scores with governors when they erred

'Umar used to say: "I have not sent my governors to beat you or to take your wealth, rather I have sent them to you to teach you

²²³ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/813; a *ṣaḥeeḥ* report; *al-Fārooq al-Ḥākim al-'Ādil*, p. 11.

your religion and Sunnah. Whoever is treated differently than that, let him refer it to me, for by the One in Whose hand is my soul, I will settle the score for him.”²²⁴ 'Umar did not stop at official announcements which warned the governors against aggression towards the people, rather he put that into practice, as we have seen above, when complaints were made against Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ (may Allah be pleased with them both).²²⁵

3.3.2. Dismissing a governor as a result of his error

'Umar dismissed governors as a result of their falling into errors of which he did not approve. He dismissed one of his governors when he interfered in matters that did not concern him with regard to his troops. He was sent to lead an army, then when he reached them he said: "I want you to tell me of every sin that you commit." So they started to confess their sins to him. News of that reached 'Umar and he said: "What is wrong with him, may he be doomed, that he goes and uncovers that which Allah had concealed? By Allah, he will never work for me again.”²²⁶

'Umar also got angry with one of his governors when he heard some of his poetry in which he mentioned wine, so he dismissed him.²²⁷

3.3.3. Destroying part of the governors' dwellings

This was done in case where there was some transgression. 'Umar was keen that the governors' houses should be without gates

²²⁴ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/127; *al-Amwāl* by Abu Salām, Pp. 63, 64.

²²⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/126, 127.

²²⁶ *Tūreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/818.

²²⁷ *As-Siyāsah ash-Shar'iyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, p. 105.

and gatekeepers. When he heard that Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (ؓ) had put a gate on his house, he sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah to him and told him to burn that gate.²²⁸ The reason for that gate was that the market was close to his house, and the loud voices in the market were disturbing Sa'd, so he put a gate to block the noise of the people in the market. News of Sa'd's house and its gate reached 'Umar, and he heard that people were calling it Sa'd's palace. So he called Muhammad ibn Maslamah and sent him to Koofah. He said: "Go to the palace and burn its gate, then come back straight away." So he went to Koofah, where he bought some firewood, took it to the palace and burned the gate.²²⁹

Ibn Shihb narrated that 'Umar appointed Mujâsha' ibn Mas'ood in charge of some work, and he heard that his wife kept buying new furnishings. 'Umar wrote to him and said: "From the slave of Allah, the Commander of the Faithful, to Mujâsha' ibn Mas'ood. Peace be upon you. I have heard that al-Khudayra' keeps buying new furnishings. When this letter of mine reaches you, I urge you not to put it down until you have torn down her wall hangings." The letter reached him when there were some people sitting with him. He looked at the letter, and the people realized that something upsetting had come to him. He took the letter in his hand then he said to the people: "Get up!" So they got up, and by Allah they did not know why he was making them get up. He took them to the door of his house, then he went in and was met by his wife, who could see something bad in his expression. She asked him, "What is the matter with you?" He said, "Go away! I am angry with you." So the woman went away and he said to the people, "Come in." The people went in and he said, "Let each one of you take what is nearest to him in this direction, and tear it down." So they all tore it down and threw it on

²²⁸ *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 77; *Nihâyat al-Irb*, 19/8.

²²⁹ *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah* by Majdlâwi, p. 216.

the ground, and the letter was still in his hand; he had not put it down yet.

When 'Umar visited Syria, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân invited him to come and eat with him. When 'Umar entered the house, he saw some wallhangings. 'Umar started to tear them up, saying, "Woe to you, do you dress walls with material that could be used by people to shield themselves from the heat and cold?"²³⁰

3.3.4. Disciplining by hitting

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) used this method and was famous for carrying his stick with which he struck people. He struck some of the governors because of some deeds that they committed. During 'Umar's visit to Syria, he entered the house of one of his governors and found that they had too many possessions. 'Umar got angry and started hitting them with his stick.²³¹ Also during 'Umar's visit to Syria, some of the governors came to meet him. The first ones who met him were Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân and Abu 'Ubaydah, then Khâlîd, who came riding horses and wearing fine garments, that did not befit the *Mujâhideen*. 'Umar dismounted, picked up some stones and started throwing them at them, and said, "How quickly you have changed your ways! Are you receiving me in this manner? It is only two years ago that you started having your fill. By Allah even if you were to do this after two hundred years I would still replace you with someone else!" They said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, this is just outward appearance; we still have our weapons on us." He said, "Fine, then."²³²

²³⁰ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/832; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/128.

²³¹ *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/129.

²³² *Ibid.*

3.3.5. Demoting a governor to a shepherd

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used this method with one of his governors. Ibn Shihb narrated that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) appointed 'Iyād ibn Ghanam as governor of Syria, then he heard that he had acquired a *ḥamām* (bath) and chose an inner circle. He wrote to him, telling to come to him. He came and 'Umar refused to meet him for three days, then he gave him permission to enter. He called for a woollen *jubbah* and said to him, "Put this on." And he gave him a shepherd's bag and three hundred sheep and said, "Call them." So he called them, and when he had gone some distance, he said, "Come back." So he came back running. He said, "Do such and such, go," and he went, then when he had gone far away, he called out to him, "O' 'Iyād, come back." He kept sending him away and calling him back until he started to sweat in that *jubbah*. He said, "Bring the sheep to me on such and such a day." He brought them to him on that day and 'Umar came out and said, "Draw water for them." So he drew water and filled the trough and gave them water. Then he said, "Call them, and bring them on such and such a day." He kept doing that until two or three months had passed, then he called him and said, "So, you chose an inner circle and acquired a *ḥamām*! Will you do it again?" He said, "No." 'Umar said: "Go back to your job."²³³ The result of this disciplinary punishment is that after that, 'Iyād became one of the best of 'Umar's governors.²³⁴

3.3.6. Taking away some of the governors' wealth

This measure was applied as a precautionary measure at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when 'Umar felt that the wealth of some of the governors was increasing too much, and he feared that

²³³ *Tāreekh al-Madeenah*, 3/817, 818; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/130.

²³⁴ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/130.

the governors had acquired some of this wealth because of their position.²³⁵ Ibn Taymiyah commented on this action of 'Umar's and said: "Similarly, showing favour to the governors in buying, renting, investments, irrigation, farming and so on is a kind of gift-giving, hence 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) took away part of the wealth of his governors in cases where there was no room for suspicion of misconduct because of their high level of virtue and religious commitment. The reason why he did that was that it was a favour that was shown to them because of their position, and because this is what was dictated by the situation, because he was a just ruler who shared out wealth equally."²³⁶ Among the governors from whom 'Umar took some of their wealth were: Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, Abu Hurayrah and 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ (may Allah be pleased with them all). 'Umar would record his governors' wealth when he appointed them, then he would take half of any increase, and in some cases he took all of the increase."²³⁷

He also took away some of the wealth of some of the governors' relatives, if he thought that that was justified. He took half of Abu Bakrah's wealth, and Abu Bakrah objected, saying: "I did not do any work for you." 'Umar said, "But your brother is in charge of the *bayt al-māl*, and he has been lending you money with which to engage in trade."²³⁸

3.3.7. Verbal and written rebukes

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) rebuked some of his governors for their conduct when they met with him. He rebuked 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ

²³⁵ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/130.

²³⁶ *Al-Fatāwa*, 28/157.

²³⁷ *Futooh al-Buldān*, Pp. 220, 221; *al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldān*, 2/131.

²³⁸ *Shaheed al-Mihrāb*, p. 250.

on several occasions, and he rebuked 'Iyād ibn Ghanam, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and other governors.²³⁹

There were also many written rebukes during the time of 'Umar, such as when 'Umar wrote to one of his governors when some people had come to him, and he had given to the Arabs and not to the non-Arabs. 'Umar wrote: "It is sufficient evil for a man to despise his fellow-Muslim."²⁴⁰

From all of this we can see that the governors were not safe from being called to account and disciplined in different ways. Mankind had never seen anything like this in terms of justice and courage, which made the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs a fine example of Islamic civilization, after the era of the Prophet (ﷺ).²⁴¹

Freedom of discussion between the caliph and his governors was guaranteed to a remarkable extent. The governors did not fear the authority of the caliph. There follow some examples of that:

When 'Umar came to Syria, he was met by Mu'âwiyah with a great entourage. When Mu'âwiyah saw 'Umar, he dismounted from his horse and walked up to him and said, "Peace be upon the Commander of the Faithful." 'Umar walked on and did not return his greeting, and Mu'âwiyah ran behind 'Umar's camel; he was a fat man and he started panting. 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you have worn the man out. Why don't you speak to him?" 'Umar turned to him and said, "O' Mu'âwiyah, are you the owner of the entourage that I see?" He said, "Yes, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar said, "And in addition to that you keep away from the people and those who are in need stand waiting at your

²³⁹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/131.

²⁴⁰ *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 443.

²⁴¹ *Al-Wilāyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/133.

door?" Mu'âwiyah said: "Yes, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." He said, "Why is that, woe to you?" Mu'âwiyah said, "Because we are in a land where the enemy has many spies, and if we do not take precautions the enemy will no longer fear us and they will attack us. As for the doorkeeper, we are afraid that we will lose respect and the people will become audacious. I am still your agent, and if you forbid me to do that, I will stop, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar said, "Whatever I ask you, you have an answer. If you are telling the truth, it is a smart idea, and if you are lying, it is a smart and subtle trick. I am not commanding you and I am not forbidding you." And he left him.²⁴²

Despite 'Umar's strictness with his governors and his careful watching of them, and his readiness to dismiss any of them of whom he was suspicious or about whom he received well-founded complaints, there was a strong bond of love and loyalty between them. They had complete faith in their caliph's sincerity, soundness of intention, policies and justice. If 'Umar lost contact with any of his leaders in the arena of jihad, the worry would almost kill him, and he would be overwhelmed with fear and concern for them. During one of the major wars, he went out himself to try and find news and put his mind at rest. In other cases he met them and we see signs of the deep love that existed between them. When 'Umar went to conquer Jerusalem, he reached al-Jâbiyah where he met his commanders 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ and Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah. 'Umar met them riding, and they kissed his knees and 'Umar hugged each one of them.²⁴³

²⁴² *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by ash-Sharqâwi, p. 287.

²⁴³ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 151.

3.4. The dismissal of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (ﷺ)

The enemies of Islam have a vivid imagination and intense hatred which enables them to hunt out reports which show the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in a bad light. If they cannot find any reports that please them, they fabricate reports that they think the people will accept, so that they may become a source for narrators and authors. Both 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed have been exposed to the fabrications of the enemies of Islam who have tried to distort the historical record. They paid a great deal of attention to the reasons why 'Umar dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (may Allah be pleased with them both) and they made false accusations against these two great men and fabricated reports which do not stand up to close scrutiny.²⁴⁴ There follows the true story of the dismissal of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, which took place in two stages, and for which there were objective reasons.

3.4.1. The first dismissal

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed for the first time from general leadership and governorship in Syria. This happened in 13 A.H., when 'Umar succeeded to the caliphate after the death of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq. The reason for this dismissal was the difference in the way Abu Bakr and 'Umar dealt with their agents and governors. Abu Bakr's method of dealing with his governors and agents was to give them complete freedom within the framework of the general system of the state, subject to the condition that they be completely just and fair between individuals and groups. He did not mind whether he himself made sure justice was done or his governors did that. The governor had the right, based on the

²⁴⁴ *Abâṭeel yajib an tumḥa min at-Tāreekh*, by Ibrâheem Sha'ooṭ, p. 123.

consent of the caliph, to run the affairs of his province without referring every minor issue to the caliph. Abu Bakr did not see any need to undermine the authority of his governors with regard to wealth or anything else, so long as justice prevailed in their provinces.²⁴⁵ ‘Umar advised Abu Bakr to write to Khâlid telling him not to give anyone a sheep or a camel except by his command. Abu Bakr wrote to Khâlid as suggested, and Khâlid wrote back to him saying, “Leave me alone to do my work my way, otherwise you should do it yourself.” ‘Umar suggested that he dismiss him²⁴⁶, but Abu Bakr left Khâlid in his post.²⁴⁷ When ‘Umar became caliph, he thought that the caliph should set out for his governors and agents guidelines on how to govern their provinces, and make it obligatory for them to report to him everything that happened, so that he could examine the matter and issue commands accordingly, and they would be obliged to carry out his commands. That was because he thought that the caliph was responsible for what he did and for what his governors did, and that this responsibility was not discharged even by selecting the best governors. When he became caliph, he addressed the people and said: “Allah is testing you by means of me and is testing me by means of you, and he has kept me alive after my two companions are gone. None of your affairs that I witness will I let anyone else deal with, and none of your affairs that I do not witness but I will strive hard to ensure that they are dealt with. If the governors do well, I shall reward them, but if they do badly, I shall punish them.”²⁴⁸ And he used to say: “Do you think that if I appoint over you the best one I know, then I enjoin him to be just, will I have fulfilled my duty?” They said, “Yes.” He said, “No, not until I

²⁴⁵ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Ṣâdiq ‘Arjoon, Pp. 321-331.

²⁴⁶ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

²⁴⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/146.

²⁴⁸ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Ṣâdiq ‘Arjoon, p. 331.

examine his work and see whether he has done what I commanded him or not.”²⁴⁹

When 'Umar became caliph, he wanted the governors to change to his methods. Some of them agreed and others refused, and among those who refused was Khâlid ibn al-Waleed.²⁵⁰ It was narrated from Mâlik ibn Anas that when 'Umar became caliph, he wrote to Khâlid saying: “Do not give anyone a sheep or a camel except by my command.” Khâlid wrote back to him saying, “Either you leave me to do my job, or you will do it yourself.” 'Umar said, “I would not be sincere towards Allah if I advised Abu Bakr to do something then I did not implement it myself.” And he dismissed him.²⁵¹ Moreover he would call upon him to do things and he would refuse unless he was given free rein to do what he wanted, but 'Umar refused to allow him that.²⁵²

So 'Umar dismissed Khâlid on the basis of his policy of rule and the ruler's right to direct the affairs of state and his responsibility for the state. Things like this happen naturally in everyday life, and there is nothing strange about this case that would require us to try to find an explanation based on reports, opinions, whims and desires, and different inclinations. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was the caliph of the Muslims at a time when people were still close to the time of Prophethood, and one of his basic rights was the right to choose governors and commanders who were in harmony with him and his policies and method of ruling, to work with him, so long as the ummah had plenty of qualified people. The governors and commanders did not have the right to remain in their posts forever,

²⁴⁹ Op. cit., p. 332.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

²⁵² *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Şâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 332.

especially when there were political differences between the ruler and the governors, so long as there were others who could replace them and do the same job. History shows us that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was very successful in this regard, and this policy of his met with unprecedented success. He dismissed some and appointed others, and the ones whom he appointed were no less qualified than those whom he dismissed, the reason being that there was a large number of people who were courageous and qualified to do this type of work.²⁵³ Khâlid accepted this dismissal without objecting, and he remained under the command of Abu 'Ubaydah (رضي الله عنه), until Allah enabled him to conquer Qinnisreen, where Abu 'Ubaydah appointed him as governor. He wrote to 'Umar describing the conquest and Khâlid's efforts therein, and 'Umar spoke his famous words: "Khâlid has appointed himself. May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr, he had more knowledge of men than me."²⁵⁴ What 'Umar meant by this was that Khâlid, because of his courage and heroic actions, had put himself in a position that he was used to, one of danger, courage and taking risks. It is as if 'Umar meant by this that Abu Bakr, by keeping Khâlid and not agreeing to dismiss him despite 'Umar's urging, had had great confidence in Khâlid's ability and military genius, which meant that no one else could fill his position except a very few of the most brilliant heroes.²⁵⁵

At this point, Khâlid had been working under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah for nearly four years, and he did not go against him even once. The virtue of Abu 'Ubaydah cannot be denied, for he realized the impact that this incident had on Khâlid, so he treated him with a great deal of respect and kindness. He kept company with him, frequently consulting him and respecting his opinion, and sometimes

²⁵³ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Šâdiq 'Arjoon, Pp. 332, 333.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

placing him in positions of leadership. All of this had an impact in leaving Khâlid's heart free of rancour, which led him to perform those heroic military deeds. His efforts in the conquests of Damascus, Qinnisreen and Faḥl bore witness to the noble spirit in which he reacted to his dismissal. In both cases (i.e., before and after his dismissal) he was the Sword of Allah, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (may Allah be pleased with him).²⁵⁶

History has recorded for us what Abu 'Ubaydah said when he consoled Khâlid at the time of his dismissal: "It is not worldly power that I seek and it is not for this world that I strive. What you see will cease and come to an end. Rather we are brothers who are fulfilling the command of Allah, and it doesn't matter if a man has his brother in charge of his religious and worldly affairs. Rather the one who is in charge knows that he is more vulnerable to temptations and sin because he is in a vulnerable position, except for those whom Allah protects, and they are few."²⁵⁷

When Abu 'Ubaydah asked Khâlid to carry out a military mission under his command, Khâlid accepted, saying: "I will do it, *insha' Allâh*. I was only waiting for you to tell me." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "I felt too shy to ask you, O' Abu Sulaymân." Khâlid said, "By Allah, if a little child had been appointed over me, I would have obeyed him. How can I go against you when you came to Islam before me and you came to Islam with those who hastened to enter the Faith, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called you *al-Ameen* (the trustworthy one)? How can I catch up with you and achieve your status? Now I ask you to bear witness that I devote myself solely for the sake of Allah and I will never disobey you or accept any position of governorship after this." Khâlid did not stop there; rather he

²⁵⁶ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Şâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 346.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 323.

followed his words with actions, and immediately went and carried out the mission that was asked of him.²⁵⁸

It is clear from Khâlid's words and actions that religious and moral motives played a major role in the actions of Khâlid and Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah be pleased with them both). Khâlid adhered to the principle of obedience to the caliph and the governor, despite the fact that his personal situation had changed from that of leader to that of follower, because of his dismissal from leadership of the army.²⁵⁹ The dismissal of Khâlid on this occasion (the first) was not because the caliph had any doubts about him or bore any grudges against him, or because he had transgressed the sacred limits of shari'ah, or because any aspersions had been cast on Khâlid's piety and justice, But there were two different methods adopted by two great men, two powerful personalities, each of whom thought it was essential to implement his own method. If one of them had to give in, the leader of the army had to give in to the caliph, without being stubborn or bearing any grudge or resentment.²⁶⁰

By the guidance of Allah, 'Umar appointed Abu 'Ubaydah as commander of the army in Syria, which after the battle of Yarmook was an area which needed peace, so that grudges would end, wounds would heal and hearts would be reconciled. Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ) hastened to make peace when the opportunity was there, but he did not shy away from war when it was necessary. If there was a way for peace, that is the way he would follow, otherwise he would prepare for war. The people of the cities in Syria had heard of Abu 'Ubaydah's forbearance, so they came to surrender to him; they preferred to deal with him than with anyone else. Abu 'Ubaydah's appointment was by 'Umar's instruction, and his governorship of

²⁵⁸ *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, 84.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Abâteel Yajib an Tumha min at-Târeekh*, p. 132.

Syria at that point was in the province's best interests.²⁶¹

3.4.2. The second dismissal

The second dismissal of Khâlid came in Qinnisreen in 17 A.H.²⁶² News reached 'Umar that Khâlid and 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam had penetrated into Byzantine territory and had come back with a great amount of booty, and that men had come to Khâlid from far and wide, hoping for his generosity, including al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi, to whom Khâlid gave ten thousand. Nothing was hidden from 'Umar of what he did.²⁶³ 'Umar wrote to his commander, Abu 'Ubaydah, ordering him to investigate the source of the wealth from which he had given al-Ash'ath this huge sum, and to dismiss him from working with the army at all. He summoned Khâlid to Madeenah and questioned him in the presence of Abu 'Ubaydah. In the end, Khâlid was proven innocent of taking ten thousand from the booty of the Muslims.²⁶⁴ When Khâlid was told of his dismissal, he bade farewell to the people of Syria. The most that he allowed himself to show of the sorrow that he felt at this separation of a commander and his troops was when he said to the people: "The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* appointed me as governor in Syria until things started to become smooth and sweet, then he dismissed me." A man stood up and said, "Be patient, O' commander, for it is the time for *fitnah*." Khâlid said, "So long as the son of al-Khaṭṭāb is alive, there is no room for *fitnah*."²⁶⁵ This is a powerful and overwhelming kind of faith, with which none were blessed except the chosen ones among the closest Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ). What spiritual strength controlled

²⁶¹ *'Abqariyat Khâlid* by al-'Aqqād, Pp. 154, 155, 156.

²⁶² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/41.

²⁶³ *Ibid*, 5/42.

²⁶⁴ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Ṣâdiq al-'Arjoon, p. 324.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 347; *al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/156.

Khâlid's nerves during this grave situation, what inspired Khâlid to give this quiet and wise answer?²⁶⁶ The people calmed down after they heard what Khâlid said in support of 'Umar's caliphate. They realized that their dismissed leader was not the type of man who would build his glory by stirring up tribulation and revolution, rather he was one of those men who are created to play a constructive role, and if circumstances want them to destroy what they have built, they rise above that.²⁶⁷

Khâlid travelled to Madeenah, where he met 'Umar. Khâlid said to 'Umar: "I complained about you to the Muslims, and by Allah you are not being kind to me, O 'Umar." 'Umar asked, "From where did this wealth come?" He said, "From my share of the booty. Whatever is more than sixty thousand is yours." 'Umar estimated the wealth and found it to be twenty thousand, which he put into the *bayt al-mâl*, then he said, "O Khâlid, by Allah you are dear to me and you will not be upset with me after today."²⁶⁸ 'Umar wrote to the regions, saying: "I did not dismiss Khâlid because I was angry with him or because of any misconduct on his part; rather the people were too attached to him and I feared that Allah would leave them to him and they would be tested because of him. I wanted them to know that Allah is the One Who brings victory, so that they would not be confused about this fact."

3.4.3. Summary of the reasons for the dismissal and some of its benefits

Based on the way in which 'Umar conducted his affairs, we can sum up the reasons for Khâlid's dismissal as follows:

²⁶⁶ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Şâdiq al-'Arjoon, p. 347.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/43.

Protection of Tawḥeed

From 'Umar's words, "rather the people were too attached to him and I feared that they would be left to him and they would be tested because of him" it is clear that 'Umar feared that the people would become confused because of Khâlid and they would think that victory came wherever Khâlid went, which would weaken their certain faith that victory comes from Allah whether Khâlid was at the head of the army or not. Too much attachment to a great commander like Khâlid would also lead Khâlid himself to become attached to his followers, and he might think himself in a position of power which could not be challenged, especially since he was brilliant in war and generous with money. That could lead to bad consequences for him and for the state. Even though it may have been a far-fetched possibility, given the fact that the people were attached to their caliph 'Umar and felt great admiration for him, and Khâlid was a man of great military discipline and piety, it could, however, happen one day after 'Umar was gone, even with a leader such as Khâlid. This required setting up guidelines at that time and with great people such as these.²⁶⁹ In such a situation the fear is greater with regard to a competent commander than a lesser commander who has no such image or reputation.²⁷⁰

Differences concerning how money is to be spent

'Umar thought that the time for softening hearts and attracting the weak in faith with money and gifts had come to an end; Islam no longer needed these people, and the people could be left to their own faith and conscience. Khâlid, on the other hand, thought that some of those courageous men and *Mujâhideen* who were fighting alongside

²⁶⁹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 149.

²⁷⁰ *'Abqariyat 'Umar*, p. 158.

him were men whose intention was not purely to seek the reward of Allah, and that men such as these needed some of this wealth to strengthen their resolve and motivate them further.²⁷¹ ‘Umar thought that the poor of the *Muhājireen* were more entitled to this wealth than others. When he told the people in al-Jābiyah of his reasons for dismissing Khâlid, he said: “I told him to keep this money to be spent on the weak ones among the *Muhājireen*, but he gave it to men of power and strength.”²⁷² Undoubtedly ‘Umar and Khâlid both had strong arguments for their opinions, but ‘Umar understood some things that Khâlid did not.²⁷³

*Difference between the methods of ‘Umar
and Khâlid in administrative issues*

‘Umar insisted that his governors should ask his permission for every matter, major or minor, whereas as Khâlid thought that he was entitled to complete freedom with no need to refer to anyone else in the field of jihad; he thought that he should be given free rein to do whatever he saw fit, on the grounds that the one who is present sees what the one who is absent does not.²⁷⁴

Perhaps another reason was to allow room for new leadership talent to grow, so that the Muslim ummah could produce more heroes of the calibre of Khâlid, al-Muthanna and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ. Another aim was to make the people realize that victory was not tied to a single man²⁷⁵, no matter who this man was.

²⁷¹ *Abâteel Yajib an Tumha min at-Târeekh*, p. 134.

²⁷² *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

²⁷³ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/147.

²⁷⁴ *Al-Khilâfah wa al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshidoon* by Sâlim al-Bahnasâwi, p. 196.

²⁷⁵ *Abâteel Yajib an Tumha min at-Târeekh*, p. 134.

The attitude of the Muslim society towards this dismissal

The Muslim society accepted this dismissal as the right of the caliph to appoint and dismiss his governors. No one had the right to rebel against the system or reject the right of the caliph to appoint and dismiss his governors.

It was narrated that 'Umar went out in the middle of the night and met 'Alqamah ibn 'Ulāthah al-Kilābi. 'Umar resembled Khâlid to a remarkable extent and 'Alqamah thought that he was Khâlid. He said, "O' Khâlid, this man has dismissed you and has insisted on being mean. I came with a cousin of mine to ask him something, but because he did what he did, I will never ask him anything." 'Umar said to him — trying to find out what he was hiding — "Well, tell me more." He said, "These people have rights over us and we have to give them their rights, and Allah will reward us." The next morning, 'Umar asked Khâlid — when 'Alqamah was looking at both of them — "What did 'Alqamah say to you last night?" Khâlid said, "By Allah, he did not say anything." 'Umar then asked, "Are you swearing to that?" 'Alqamah got upset and thought that he had not spoken to anyone the night before but Khâlid, and he started to say, "Come on, O' Khâlid." 'Umar was generous to 'Alqamah and met his need, and he said, "If there were more people out there who think like you — i.e., were keen to obey the ruler even when they disagree with him — that would be dearer to me than such and such."²⁷⁶

However an objection came from Abu 'Amr ibn Ḥaḥṣ ibn al-Mugheerah, the cousin of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, at al-Jābiyah. When 'Umar said to the people: "I will tell you the reason why (I dismissed) Khâlid ibn al-Waleed; I ordered him to keep this wealth for the weak ones among the *Muhājireen*, but he gave it to men of power and strength, those who were of high status and eloquent. So I dismissed

²⁷⁶ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen*, p. 151.

him and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Jarrāḥ," Abu 'Amr ibn Ḥaṣṣ ibn al-Mugheerah said, "By Allah, you have not justified it, O' 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. You have dismissed a commander who was appointed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have sheathed a sword that was unsheathed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have taken down a banner that was set up by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). You have severed the ties of kinship and shown jealousy towards your cousin." 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, "You are closely related to him, and young in age, and angry for the sake of your cousin."²⁷⁷ Thus 'Umar showed tolerance to the cousin of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed who was defending Khâlid to such an extent that he accused 'Umar of jealousy (*ḥasad*). But despite that, 'Umar remained patient.²⁷⁸

The death of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and what he said about 'Umar when he was on his deathbed

Abu ad-Dardâ' went to see Khâlid during his final illness and Khâlid said to him: "O' Abu ad-Dardâ', when 'Umar dies, you will see things that you dislike." Abu ad-Dardâ' said to him, "By Allah, I agree with you." Khâlid said, "I got upset with him for a certain issue, but when I thought about it when I got sick and felt that death is at hand, I realized that 'Umar seeks to please Allah in all that he does. I got upset with him when he sent someone to take half of my wealth, and he even took one shoe and I took the other. But he did that to others who had come to Islam earlier than me, and who had been present at Badr. He was harsh with me, but he was similarly harsh with others. I expected him to treat me well because we were closely related, but I saw that he did not care about that and he did not worry

²⁷⁷ Nasâ'i, hadith no. 8283. A *ṣaḥeeḥ* report from *as-Sunan al-Kubra. Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/496, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²⁷⁸ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayât al-Faqoor*, p. 219.

about the blame of anyone for the sake of the truth. That is what took away the feelings I had about him. He got upset with me, but it was only because we had different views. I was there in the arena of war, striving hard. I was there and he was not. I used to give based on the circumstances and he did not like that.”²⁷⁹ When death approached and he realized that, he wept and said: “There is no deed that I have done that gives me more hope, after saying *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh*, than an intensely cold night with a raiding party of the *Muhâjireen*, which I spent carrying my shield in the rain, waiting for morning to come so that we could raid the *kuffâr*. You must engage in jihad. I witnessed such and such battles, and there is no place on my body the size of a handspan that has not received a blow from a sword or been pierced by an arrow or spear, but here I am, dying on my bed as a camel dies. May the cowards never prosper. I sought death in the places where it may be sought, but it was only decreed that I should die on my own bed.”²⁸⁰ Khâlid asked ‘Umar to execute his will, in which it said: “I entrust my affairs, my estate and the execution of my will to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.” ‘Umar (ﷺ) wept and mourned deeply for him, and the daughters of his paternal uncle also wept for him. It was said to ‘Umar that he should tell them to stop, but he said: “Let them weep for Abu Sulaymân so long as they are not eulogizing him or babbling. For the like of Abu Sulaymân let the weepers weep.”²⁸¹

And he said concerning him, “A hole has developed in the structure of Islam.” When Hishâm ibn al-Bakhtari came to ‘Umar with some people from Banu Makhzoom, ‘Umar said to Hishâm, who was a poet, “Recite to me what you said about Khâlid.” When he recited it, he said, “You have fallen short in praising Abu

²⁷⁹ *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Şâdiq ‘Arjoon, 349; *al-Khilâfah wa al-Khulafa’*, p. 198.

²⁸⁰ *Siyar A’lâm an-Nubala’*, 1/382; *aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ’in*, p. 367.

²⁸¹ *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ’in*, p. 366.

Sulaymân, may Allah have mercy on him. He loved to humiliate *shirk* and its people.” Then he said: “May Allah have mercy on Abu Sulaymân. What is with Allah is better for him than what he had (in this world). He is missed after his death and he was praised whilst he lived.²⁸² No one will live forever.”²⁸³ He died and was buried in Homs, in Syria, in 21 A.H. May Allah bestow abundant mercy upon him and raise his status among the righteous.

²⁸² *Tahdheeb Tāreekh Dimashq*, 5/116.

²⁸³ *Khālid ibn al-Waleed*, by Sādiq ‘Arjoon, p. 348.

CHAPTER SIX

The Conquests of Iraq and the East at the Time of 'Umar

1. The Second Stage of the Conquest of Iraq and the East

The conquests in Iraq at the time of Abu Bakr, under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, represent the first stage of the Islamic conquests which spread out towards the east. They have been discussed in detail in my book *Abu Bakr (ﷺ) Shakhsiyatuhu wa 'Asruhu*. During the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ), there were further conquests.

1.1. The appointment of Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi as leader of the war in Iraq

When Abu Bakr died and was buried at night on Tuesday 22 *Jumâda al-Âkhirah* 13 A.H., the following morning 'Umar exhorted the people to fight the people of Iraq and he reminded them of the reward for that. But no one responded because the people did not like to fight the Persians, due to their strength and toughness in fighting. He exhorted them again on the second and third days, and no one responded. Al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah spoke well and told them of the conquests of most of the land of Iraq that Allah had granted at the hands of Khâlid, and of the wealth and property that was there. But

no one responded on the third day. On the fourth day, the first of the Muslims to respond was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, then the people responded one after another.¹ Saleet ibn Qays al-Ansâri responded to the call of 'Umar after Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I am giving myself for the sake of Allah as do those of my cousins who agree to come and others who have joined me."² These words of Saleet had a strong impact, encouraging the people, raising their morale and increasing their desire for jihad against the Persians. They asked the caliph to appoint a man from among the *Muhâjireen* or Ansâr over them, and 'Umar said: "By Allah, I cannot find anyone who is more deserving of that than the one who encouraged the people first. Were it not that Saleet is too hasty in war, I would have appointed him over you. But Abu 'Ubayd is the commander and Saleet is his adviser." The people said, "We will listen and obey."³ According to another report: "He appointed Abu 'Ubayd over them all, although he was not a *Ṣaḥâbi*. It was said to 'Umar, 'Why didn't you appoint a man from the *Ṣaḥâbah* over them?' He said, 'Rather I will appoint the first one who responded. You became superior to the people because of your support for this religion, but he is the one who responded before you.' Then he called him and advised him with regard to himself to fear Allah and with regard to the Muslims to be kind to them. He commanded him to consult the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and to consult Saleet ibn Qays, because he was a man who was experienced in war."⁴

'Umar's advice to Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi included the following words: "Listen to the Companions of the Messenger of

¹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

² *Al-Futooh* by Ibn A'tham, 1/164; *al-Ansâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 216.

³ *Al-Ansâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 216.

⁴ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

Allah (ﷻ) and let them have a say in this matter. Do not rush into decisions, rather take your time, for war cannot be led except by a man who takes his time in making decisions and who knows the right time to move. Nothing prevented me from appointing Saleeṭ but his haste. Being hasty in war, except in cases where the situation is clear, will lead to doom.”⁵ Then he said: “You are going to a land of treachery, betrayal and oppression. You are going to people who are audacious in committing evil and know it well; they have forgotten good and become ignorant of it. So see what you will do. Watch what you say and do not disclose your secrets, for so long as the one who has a secret and is keeping it, he will be safe, but if he does not keep the secret, that will be the cause of his doom.”⁶

Then he commanded al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah to go ahead, and the army would catch up with him. He commanded him to go out and mobilize those of the apostates who had truly repented. So he set out, hastening until he reached al-Ḥeerah. ‘Umar followed the events on the fronts in Iraq and Syria, supplying the army with provisions and reinforcements, sending instructions and commands to them and setting out battle plans which he himself supervised.

The Muslims, who were seven thousand strong, marched towards Iraq. ‘Umar wrote to Abu ‘Ubaydah, telling him to send whoever was in Iraq of those who had been with Khālid in Iraq. So he equipped ten thousand men, led by Hāshim ibn ‘Utbah. ‘Umar sent Jareer ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Bajali with four thousand men to Iraq, and he came to Koofah. When the people arrived in Iraq, they found the Persians in a state of political turmoil. The latest development was that Boorān the daughter of Chosroes had become their queen after they had killed her predecessor Azarmidakht. Boorān delegated the

⁵ *Itmām al-Wafā’ fee Seerat al-Khulafā’*, p. 65.

⁶ *Ibid.*

running of the kingdom's affairs to a man called Rustam ibn Farrakhzâd, on the basis that he would conduct the war, and the power would be returned to the family of Chosroes, which he accepted. This Rustam was an astrologer who knew the stars very well. It was said to him, "What made you do that?" meaning, when you know that this is not going to last. He said: "Greed and the love of power."⁷

1.2. The Battle of an-Namâriq, the Battle of as-Saqâṭiyah in Kaskar, and the Battle of Baroosma

1.2.1. The battle of an-Namâriq 13 A.H.

This battle followed the arrival of Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi and his assumption of military command in Iraq. It is as if the Persians wanted to frighten Abu 'Ubayd at the outset, when he was new in his position, so as to break his will and make him despair of victory. So they prepared the civilians and mobilized their troops, and met the Muslims there (in an-Namâriq), from behind and from in front. They wrote to the chieftains of the masses telling them to revolt against the Muslims, and they sent to every region a man to stir up the people. They sent Jabân to al-Babahaqqabâdh al-Asfal, and Narsi to Kaskar, and they sent troops to fight al-Muthanna... Al-Muthanna heard news of that, so he got the army to keep a lookout and was very cautious. The chieftains revolted one after another, and the people of various regions revolted one after another. Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi and al-Muthanna camped in Khaffân, then the battle took place in al-Namâriq. The fighting was intense, but Allah defeated the Persians. The commanders Jabân and Mardânsah, who were leading the two

⁷ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/27.

flanks of the army, were taken prisoner; together, they had led the revolt.⁸

The one who captured Jabān was Maṭar ibn Fuḍḍah at-Tameemī, who did not know who he was. Jabān tricked him by offering him something to let him go, but the Muslims caught him and brought him to Abu 'Ubayd. They told him that he was the leader of the Persians and suggested that he execute him. He said: "I fear Allah if I kill him when one of the Muslims guaranteed his safety." The Muslims, in their mutual love and support, are like a single body, and what is binding on one is binding on all. They said, "He is the king," meaning the leader. He said, "Even so, I will not betray (that guarantee)," and he let him go.⁹

This attitude on the part of Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi is regarded as an example of Muslim tolerance and their fulfilment of covenants, even if only some of them had agreed to them. Undoubtedly this sublime attitude had a great impact in attracting people to enter Islam, when news spread among the people that the Muslims had let one of the Persian leaders go, one of their worst enemies, simply because one Muslim had agreed to set him free in return for a ransom. They were attracted to this religion which produced such men. We should not forget the brilliant attitude of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah, when Abu 'Ubayd became the commander, even though he was coming to Iraq for the first time because the caliph had appointed him. He was a good commander and a good soldier. This was one of the characteristics of al-Muthanna. He had done the same thing with Khālid ibn al-Waleed before, and his service to Islam was no different whether he was a leader or a soldier. Such are great men.¹⁰

⁸ *Ḥarakat al-Faṭḥ al-Islāmi* by Shukri Faiṣal, p. 72.

⁹ *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/87.

¹⁰ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/334.

1.2.2. The battle of as-Saqâṭiyah in Kaskar

Then Abu 'Ubayd went after those who had fled, who had sought refuge in the city of Kaskar¹¹, which was under the command of a nephew of Chosroes whose name was Narsi. Narsi had supported the fight against Abu 'Ubayd. Abu 'Ubayd met them in as-Saqâṭiyah¹², where he defeated them and acquired a great deal of booty and food.¹³ Narsi fled, and the Muslims defeated his army and took over his land, and found a large amount of supplies in his stores.

Abu 'Ubayd stayed in Kaskar and sent forces to pursue the Persians and discipline the people of neighbouring towns who had broken the treaty and supported the Persians. The Muslims prevailed in the region after this victory. Some governors came seeking peace treaties, two of whom brought some of their finest food to Abu 'Ubayd and said, "This is to honour you." He said, "Have you honoured the rest of the troops in the same manner?" They said, "It is not easy, but we will do that." Abu 'Ubayd said, "We have no need of it if there is not enough for all the troops." Then they got scared and feared for their lives. Abu 'Ubayd said, "Do you not know that I will only eat if there is enough for those who are with me?" They said, "There is no one left who has not had his fill of this and more in their camp." When he realized that, he accepted it from them. He ate some and he sent some to some guests whom he had invited to eat with him. These visitors had some of that Persian food, and they did not think that Abu 'Ubayd would have such food. They thought that they were being invited to eat the kind of coarse food that Abu 'Ubayd usually ate, and they did not like to leave the food that had been brought to them. They said, "Tell the commander, we do not want to leave anything that the chieftains have brought to us." He sent word

¹¹ Kaskar is a small town between Koofah and Baṣra.

¹² As-Saqâṭiyah: A district of Kaskar.

¹³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/272.

to them saying, "There is a lot of Persian food, come and compare it with what you had."¹⁴

This noble and humble commander ate after he had refused the Persians' food twice, because he realized, the third time, that they had fed all the troops with similar food and more. He did not like to eat until he had called his visitors and urged them to eat, and he knew that they had had some of that Persian food and he listed the types of food, to encourage them to join him. This is a kind of noble generosity, and it is one of the most important elements of leadership. This attitude shows us the sublime level of noble attitudes that the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) and those who followed them had reached.¹⁵

1.2.3. The battle of Baroosma 13 A.H.

Then they met in a place between Kaskar and as-Saqāṭīyah which was called Baroosma. On the right and left flanks of Narsi's army were two of his cousins, Bandawayh and Beerawayh. Rustam had put the army under the command of Jalinus. When Abu 'Ubayd heard of that, he hastened to fight before the rest came. The fighting was intense, and the Persians were defeated and Narsi fled. Abu 'Ubayd sent al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah and other troops to some areas of that region, such as the river of Jawr which they conquered by means of treaties and by force. They imposed the *jizyah* and *kharāj*, and captured a great deal of booty, praise be to Allah. They defeated Jalinus, who had come to support Jabān, and captured a lot of booty from his army and seized his wealth, and he fled to his people, humiliated and defeated.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/272, 273

¹⁵ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/336.

¹⁶ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah* by Dr. Muhammad Ṣāmil as-Sulami, p. 89.

Thus the three armies of Persia were destroyed in a short period of time. The Persians could have united these armies and attacked the Muslims from all sides, because of their great numbers, but Allah made them confused and because of their great fear of the Muslims, each commander was hoping that the other would do the job and weaken the Muslims so that he could come and claim victory. What benefited the Muslims was their ability to move quickly, in contrast to the slow movements of the enemy army.¹⁷

1.3. Abu 'Ubayd's battle of the bridge 13 A.H.

When al-Jalinus fled from the Muslims, the Persians regrouped and gathered around Rustam. He mobilized a huge army led by Bahman Jâdhawayh and gave him the flag of Chosroes which was called *Dirafsh Kabyân* (which means "great flag") and which the Persians regarded as lucky. It was made of tiger skins, and was eight cubits wide and twelve cubits long. They reached where the Muslims were, and between them was a river, crossed by a bridge. They sent word saying, "Either you cross over to us, or we will cross over to you." The Muslims said to their commander Abu 'Ubayd, "Tell them to cross over to us." He said: "They are not more courageous than we are." Then he crossed over to them and they met in a narrow place, where they fought intensely. The Muslims had nearly ten thousand men. The Persians had brought elephants with them, which were wearing a lot of bells, to scare the Muslims' horses. Every time they attacked the Muslims, the horses fled from the elephants, because of the sound of those bells. Only a few horses could be made to stand firm, with great difficulty. When the Muslims attacked them, their horses would not go near the elephants, and the Persians hit them

¹⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/337.

with arrows and killed many people. But the Muslims still managed to kill six thousand of them.¹⁸

The Muslims' horses were scared of the sound of the bells worn by the elephants, and the Muslims could not reach the enemy with the elephants scaring their horses, so Abu 'Ubayd went on foot and the people did likewise, and they started fighting them with their swords. The Muslims lost their horses and became foot soldiers, fighting the Persian elephants, horsemen and foot soldiers, as well as the archers who struck the Muslims as they were trying to drive their horses forward, and the horses were refusing. It was a difficult situation, but the Muslims showed great courage and sacrifice, such as has rarely been seen in history. They stood up to the Persians despite their superiority in weaponry and means of fighting. The elephants were the worst weapon faced by the Muslims, for they had thrown their ranks into disarray. Abu 'Ubayd called them to focus on the elephants, cut their saddle straps and push their riders off. He himself started with the white elephant; he hung onto its strap and cut it, and its riders fell off. The Muslims did likewise, not leaving any elephant but they pushed its riders off and killed them. But the elephants continued to attack, because they had been trained to do so. Abu 'Ubayd thought that he should get rid of them, so he asked how they could be killed, and he was told that if he cut off their trunks, they would die. So he attacked the white elephant and struck its trunk with the sword, but the elephant defended itself with its foreleg, throwing him to the ground and then stepping on him. His brother al-Ḥakam ibn Mas'ood took the flag and fought the elephant until he managed to get it off Abu 'Ubayd, but the same thing happened to him as had happened to Abu 'Ubayd. Al-Ḥakam wanted to kill it, but it threw him down with its foreleg and stepped on him. The Muslim

¹⁸ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, p. 90.

flag passed to those who had been named by Abu 'Ubayd, including his three sons, Wahb, Mâlik and Jabr, until they were all killed, then leadership passed to al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah, at the end of the day. Some of the Muslims had crossed the bridge, retreating, and the withdrawal from the battlefield continued. When 'Abdullâh ibn Marthad ath-Thaqafi saw that, he hastened to cut the bridge, and said: "Die for the same cause as your commanders died, or be victorious!" He tried to stop the people crossing the bridge, so they brought him to al-Muthanna, who hit him because he was so angry with what he had done. He said: "What made you do that?" He said, "So that they would fight." But his idea was not appropriate, because cutting the bridge led to some of the Muslims falling into the river and drowning, because of the intense pressure from the Persians. But the idea of the Muslims protecting those who were left by withdrawing if they could was the right idea. This is what al-Muthanna did when he ordered that *the bridge be restored. He and the Muslim heroes with him stood and protected the Muslims' backs until they had crossed.* Al-Muthanna said: "O' people, we will protect you; take your time to cross (the bridge) and do not rush, for we will not leave until we see that you are on the other side. Do not drown yourselves." Muthanna and the heroes who were with him, such as 'Âsim ibn 'Amr and al-Kalj ad-Dabbi, were the last ones to cross. Bahman Jâdhawayh tried to destroy the remaining Muslims, but he was not able to. Muthanna robbed him of this opportunity when he took charge of this organized withdrawal. Undoubtedly these heroes who protected the Muslims' backs until they had withdrawn strove their utmost in standing firm before the enemy. Five thousand Muslims withdrew, leaving behind four thousand martyrs, among whom was a large number of the *Ṣahâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them), especially those who had accompanied Abu 'Ubayd from Madeenah. Two thousand of those who withdrew returned to Madeenah and elsewhere, and only three thousand stayed with al-Muthanna. As for the Persians, six thousand

of them had been killed, despite the bad situation in which the Muslims had found themselves, which is indicative of their courage and steadfastness.¹⁹

The most important lessons of Abu 'Ubayd's battle of the bridge

1.3.1. True dreams

Dawmah, the wife of Abu 'Ubayd, had seen a dream in which a man came down from heaven with a vessel in which there was a drink. Abu 'Ubayd, his son Jabr and some of his family drank from it. She told Abu 'Ubayd about that and he said: "This is martyrdom." Abu 'Ubayd announced to the people: "If I am killed, then So and so is in charge of the people," and he listed seven men of Thaqeef, who were relatives of his whom his wife had seen in her dream. When the last of them was killed, leadership passed to al-Muthanna ibn Hārithah.²⁰

1.3.2. Two mistakes which led to defeat

Abu 'Ubayd went against the advice of the army commanders and prominent figures who were with him, who told him not to cross the bridge, but he did not pay attention. He went his own way and crossed the bridge with great courage and the desire for martyrdom, but he did not plan properly for the battle. He did not study the lay of the land sufficiently.²¹ He lost an element of security when he confined himself to a place with a narrow exit and it is as if he led his

¹⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/279; *at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/341.

²⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/277.

²¹ *'Awāmil an-Naṣr wa al-Hazeemah*, p. 55.

army into a trap with no reason. He lost the advantage of using different types of weapons together when his horsemen no longer played a role in the battle, and his forces had to proceed on foot with no cavalry, and they had to face the infantry, cavalry and elephants of the Persians. There was no efficient leadership in this battle until al-Muthanna finally took over, after the seven who had gone before him. He also forfeited the ability to manoeuvre his troops properly because of the narrowness of the place, as the large number of his troops was no use in unsuitable terrain, and he did not succeed in choosing a good battle plan to help him achieve his aims. He lost all that, and in fact he handed it all to the enemy to use against him.²²

What made Abu 'Ubayd's error worse was another mistake which compounded the first. This was the mistake made by 'Abdullâh ibn Marthad ath-Thaqafi when he cut the bridge so that none of the Muslims could retreat. Were it not for the grace of Allah, then the steadfastness of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah and those who were with him, all the Muslims would have been killed.²³

1.3.3. The value of strong leadership in the field

The battle of the bridge proves the importance of strong leadership in the field, as represented by al-Muthanna and the commanders who were with him. When calamity befell the army, those leaders who could do so brought their troops out of that situation.²⁴ With the help of those heroes, al-Muthanna was able to protect the Muslim army and he was the last one to cross the bridge. This is one of the noblest kinds of sacrifice.²⁵

²² *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 414.

²³ *'Awâmil an-Naṣr wa al-Hazeemah*, p. 55.

²⁴ *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 414.

²⁵ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/343.

1.3.4. Al-Muthanna raised the morale of his troops

Al-Muthanna withdrew with four thousand troops who were left from the original number of ten thousand, and he began his pursuit of the two Persian leaders, Jabân and Mardanshah, in the direction of Alees (as-Samâwâh). Al-Muthanna pursued them for a long distance, because he did not want them to launch a counter-attack until they had gone far from the place of withdrawal. When he reached as-Samâwâh, he launched a sudden and shocking attack with his cavalry, which he himself led, and defeated them. It seems that the element of surprise, and the fact that they could not imagine that a man who has lost most of his army would be able to show such resolve, left the Persians stunned by this attack, and they suffered great losses as a result. Al-Muthanna managed to capture the two leaders, whom he executed. This victory had an immense impact on strengthening the morale of those who were left of his army and of the local inhabitants; it also raised the status of al-Muthanna in the eyes of his troops and the neighbouring tribes.²⁶

1.3.5. Every time the Muslims are faced with a dilemma, Allah will create the means to get them out of that

Al-Muthanna stayed in Iraq with a small number who were not enough to guard the lands and possessions that the Muslims had gained. The Persians could have driven the remnant of the Muslim army out of Iraq, and they would have found that the Arabs who were still loyal to them would chase the Muslims out into the desert. But Allah was with this believing group as He is with the believers in all places. Every time the sincere Muslims fall into a dilemma, Allah creates the means for them to get out of that. Allah created something

²⁶ *Al-Harb an-Nafsiyah*, by Dr. Aḥmad Nawfal, 1/167.

that distracted the Persians from the Muslims and they split into two groups, one with Rustam and one with Fayrazân. News of that reached the Persian ruler, Bahman Jâdhawayh, and he hastened to return to al-Madâ'in, as he was one who was looked up to in political affairs. Thus Allah spared the Muslims from fighting and He spared them from calamity. This gave them the opportunity to receive reinforcements coming from Madeenah to strengthen them and make their army bigger.²⁷

1.4. The battle of al-Buwayb 13 A.H.

'Umar mobilized the people and sent reinforcements to the Muslim army in Iraq, among whom were Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali and his people, and Ḥandḥalah ibn ar-Rabee'. He also sent Hilâl ibn 'Alqamah and a group from the tribes of Khath'am under the leadership of 'Abdullâh ibn Dhi as-Sahmayn. He also sent them to Iraq to join the Muslim troops there. Both 'Umar ibn Rib'i ibn Ḥandḥalah, with his people, and Rib'i ibn 'Âmir ibn Khâlid came to the caliph and he sent them to join the troops in Iraq too. Thus columns of reinforcements came one after another, marching towards Iraq. At the same time, al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah as-Shaybâni sent word to the Muslim commanders in Iraq, asking for support, and they sent reinforcements to increase the size of his army.²⁸

When the Persian leaders found out that a huge army had gathered around al-Muthanna, they sent Mahrân al-Hamadhâni with an army of horsemen to confront the army of al-Muthanna. When al-Muthanna found out about that, he wrote to the reinforcements who were coming to him, telling them to join him at al-Buwayb. These

²⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/345, 346.

²⁸ *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arruḍiyah ad-Difâ'iyah* by Nihâd 'Abbâs, p. 115.

reinforcements were being led by Jareer ibn 'Abdullāh, and when al-Muthanna wrote to him, he said: "A new development has arisen and we cannot wait here until you join us, so hasten to join us and we will meet in al-Buwayb." So they met in al-Buwayb, and there was nothing between them and the Persian army but the river. Al-Muthanna waited until Mahrân wrote to him and said: "Either you cross over to us or we will cross over to you." Al-Muthanna said, "Cross over." So Mahrân crossed over with his army. That happened in Ramaḍân 13 A.H. Al-Muthanna stood up and addressed his troops, and said to the Muslims: "You are fasting and fasting weakens you; I think that you should break your fast and eat something to gain strength to fight your enemy." They agreed to that and broke their fast. Then al-Muthanna prepared his army and went around encouraging them to fight, saying to every group: "I hope that the Arabs will not be defeated because of you. By Allah, there is nothing that I want for myself this day that I do not want for you." The narrators said that al-Muthanna was kind to them in word and deed, and he stayed with the people at times of hardship and times of ease; no one could find fault with him in word or deed.²⁹ This is indicative of his good leadership and great wisdom, and of the fact that the army obeyed him out of love and conviction. When al-Muthanna was pleased with the army's preparations he said, "I will say *takbeer* three times, so get ready, then attack when I say it the fourth time." But when he said the first *takbeer*, the Persians attacked first, so they rushed forward and engaged with them with the first *takbeer*. It was not the Persians' custom to rush into battle, but perhaps what had happened at the battle of the bridge, where the Muslims were defeated, had taken away some of the Persians' fear of the Muslims. Thus the Persians began the attack, and the Muslims stood firm and continued to engage in heavy fighting with them. As well as

²⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/287.

participating in the fighting, al-Muthanna was also watching carefully over his army. Whenever he saw any weak point, he sent a man there to tell them, "The commander sends his *salâm* to you and says: "Do not expose the Muslims to danger today." They agreed and filled the gap.³⁰

When the battle had raged fiercely for a long time, al-Muthanna said to Anas ibn Hilâl: "O' Anas, if you see me attacking Mahrân, join me," and he said likewise to Ibn Mardi al-Fahr. Then al-Muthanna attacked Mahrân, and pushed him towards the right flank. Al-Muthanna continued to put pressure on his army. The cores of the two armies met in combat and the dust flew up; the flanks were also fighting and could not come to the aid of their leaders, either the *mushrikoon* or the Muslims. Mas'ood ibn Hârithah, the commander of the Muslim infantry, said to his troops: "If you see that we are struck, do not stop fighting, for you will expose the army and cause defeat. Stick to your positions and do not leave any gaps."³¹ Mas'ood and other Muslim commanders were struck, and Mas'ood saw his troops wavering because he had been hit and was weak and heavily wounded. He said, "O' troops of Bakr ibn Wâ'il, raise your flags, may Allah grant you victory! Do not be stunned because of my death." Al-Muthanna realized that his brother had been struck so he addressed the people, saying, "O' Muslims, do not worry about my brother being struck, for the best of you die in that manner."

Anas ibn Hilâl an-Numayri fought until he was struck. Al-Muthanna carried him and carried his brother Mas'ood, and brought them to his tent. The fighting was still raging all along the front, but in the heart of the battle the tide began to turn against the Persians. The core of the Muslim army inflicted heavy losses on the Persian

³⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/288.

³¹ *Ibid.*

core, and al-Muthanna drove a wedge into the core of the Persian army. Among those who penetrated the Persian army was Jareer ibn 'Abdullāh, along with Bajeer, Ibn al-Hawbar and al-Mundhir ibn Ḥassān, and the people of Ḍabbah who were with them. Qurṭ ibn Jamāḥ al-'Abdi fought until many spears and swords were broken in his hand; he killed Shahr Barāz, one of the Persian chieftains and the leader of their cavalry. The fighting continued until the Muslims destroyed the core of the Persian army and penetrated deep into their ranks.³² Al-Muthanna stood where the dust was thick until it settled, and the core of the *mushrik* army had been finished off and their commander Mahrām had been killed, but the flanks of the armies were still fighting one another. When the Muslims on the flanks saw that the core of the army had been defeated and its people were dead, their resolve against the *mushrikeen* was strengthened and they started chasing the Persians. Al-Muthanna and the Muslims in the core were praying for their victory, until the Muslims defeated the Persians. Then al-Muthanna rushed to the bridge before the Persians got there and cut it, and the Persians spread all over the banks of the Euphrates and the Muslim horsemen attacked them and killed them, leaving their bodies in heaps. Some narrators report that the number of their slain reached one hundred thousand.³³

1.4.1. The council of war after the battle

The fighting ceased and al-Muthanna and the Muslims looked at the tens of thousands of bodies; the ground was soaked with their blood and remains. Then he sat with the army to discuss the matter and ask them what they had done. Every time a man came al-Muthanna said to him: "Tell me what you did," and they told him and

³² *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madā'in*, Pp. 433, 434; *aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/289.

³³ *Aṭ-Ṭāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/349; *Ṭāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/289.

gave him a picture of the battle. Al-Muthanna said: "The Arabs and the Persians fought during the *Jâhiliyah* and after Islam came. By Allah, during the *Jâhiliyah*, a hundred Persians were stronger than a thousand Arabs, but today a hundred Arabs are stronger than a thousand Persians. Allah has taken away their power and weakened them, so do not be confused by their appearance or their great numbers..."³⁴

This comment at this time was entirely appropriate, because al-Muthanna explained his good experience in war with the Persians at a time when many of the Muslims had come to Iraq to take part in war against the Persians for the first time. Al-Muthanna compared what they had seen in a particular battle with other battles that he had fought before.³⁵

1.4.2. Al-Muthanna's regret at cutting the Persians' line of retreat

Al-Muthanna regretted cutting the Persians' line of retreat and taking away the bridge from behind them. He said: "I made a mistake, but Allah reduced its impact when I rushed to the bridge ahead of them and cut it so as to corner them. I believe this was a mistake, so do not do it and do not follow my example. It was a mistake on my part; no one should be cornered."³⁶ Al-Muthanna explained the reason for this mistake at the end of this speech, when he noted, on the basis of his experience in warfare, that preventing the enemy from fleeing makes them fight more fiercely in self-defence. When a man realizes that he is going to be killed, he does his utmost to defend himself. This cost the army a great deal of effort as they

³⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/290.

³⁵ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352.

³⁶ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/291.

tried to finish off the enemy, but Allah reduced the impact of this mistake as al-Muthanna stated, as it helped the Muslims to remain steadfast, so their power was greater than the enemy could bear. Allah cast fear into the hearts of the enemy until they lost their ability to resist and defend themselves.³⁷

Al-Muthanna's acknowledgment of this mistake, although he was the man who achieved a great victory in this battle, is indicative of strong faith and selflessness, for he put the interests of the group before his own self-interests. This is the mark of a great man.³⁸

1.4.3. Al-Muthanna's knowledge of military psychology

In addition to what we have mentioned of al-Muthanna's genius, his brilliance included another depth which has to do with war, which was his knowledge of military psychology and how to deal with one's brothers in jihad. We see that a spirit of overwhelming love tied al-Muthanna to those who were with him, which highlights his emotional attitude towards them. This stands out in the way that he spoke to them and the way they spoke of him. We see it when he went around on his horse ash-Shumoos to each group in turn, encouraging them and giving them instructions, and motivating them to do their best, telling them, "By Allah, I like for myself this day nothing other than what I like for all of you."³⁹ And they responded to him in like manner. The narrators say that no one could find fault with him in word or deed.⁴⁰ When he saw the Persian ranks attacking, with their voices raised, he realized the effect that this would have in hand-to-hand combat, especially when the memory of

³⁷ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/350.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/287; *at-Tāreeq ila al-Madā'in*, p. 446.

⁴⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/287.

Abu 'Ubayd's bridge was still fresh in their minds. So he spoke cunning words which helped them to remain steadfast and counteracted the effect of that loud noise. He said, with amazing calmness, "What you are hearing is a sign of failure. Keep quiet and only speak in whispers."⁴¹

When his brother Mas'ood was struck a fatal blow, he spoke words that deserve to be engraved in letters of gold: "O' Muslims, do not worry about the fall of my brother, for this is how the best of you fall."⁴² No less great were the words spoken by his brother himself, when he was offering his soul with the joy of martyrdom: "Raise your flags, may Allah grant you victory. Do not worry about my falling." When al-Muthanna stood to offer the funeral prayer for his brother and some of the martyrs he said: "What consoles me is the fact that they witnessed the battle of al-Buwayb; they went forward and were steadfast; they were not scared and they did not retreat. Indeed in martyrdom there is expiation for sins."⁴³ Al-Muthanna loved his troops and was compassionate towards them, and checked on them frequently. At the same time, he was strict and decisive, adhering to what is known nowadays as military discipline.⁴⁴ When he saw a man who was eager and pushing ahead, he said, "What is the matter with him?" They said, "He is one of those who fled from the battlefield on the day of the bridge, and now he is eager to fight." He hit him with his spear and said, "What's wrong with you? Stay where you are, then when you see someone of your own caliber, then take care of him; you do not have to kill yourself." He said, "I shall do that," and he settled down and stayed in his rank.⁴⁵ As al-

⁴¹ *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 446.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/291.

⁴⁴ *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 447.

⁴⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/283.

Muthanna was compassionate towards his troops, the feeling was mutual. We see that clearly in the poetry which flowed from the lips of his soldiers. One of his troops composed lines of verse which indicated that he clearly preferred al-Muthanna to Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and Abu 'Ubaydah ath-Thaqafi. The poet was from the tribe of 'Abd Qays, he was not from Banu Shaybân or Banu Bakr ibn Wâ'il, so that it might be said that he had a clannish attachment to his own people.⁴⁶

Al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah was a commander with a deep knowledge of military psychology, centuries before any professor wrote a single letter on this subject.⁴⁷

1.4.4. The attitude of the womenfolk of the *Mujâhideen*

One of the attitudes which should be noted is that of the womenfolk of the Muslims, when the Muslim commander sent them some of the food that they had acquired. He sent it with one of the Christian Arab leaders, whose name was 'Amr ibn 'Abdul-Maseeh ibn Buqaylah, with some of his men. When the women saw them, they screamed thinking it was a raid, and they started to protect their children by throwing stones and sticks at them. 'Amr ibn 'Abdul-Maseeh said: "This is how you would expect the womenfolk of this army to be," and he gave them the good news of the victory.⁴⁸ This attitude is indicative of a sound Muslim education and shows how a Muslim character should be, even among women, for they must have had some training in how to defend themselves when there were no men around. This decisive victory gave the Muslims free rein in Iraq in the region between the two rivers. Al-Muthanna sent his leaders to

⁴⁶ *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p 447.

⁴⁷ *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 448.

⁴⁸ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352; *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/292.

subdue other regions to Muslim rule, where they collected the booty that Allah bestowed upon them so that they could continue the jihad against their enemies.⁴⁹

1.4.5. Pursuit of the fleeing remnants of the army

The joy of victory did not deflect al-Muthanna from his goal. After the battle, he urged the people to follow the defeated army to as-Sayyib. The Muslims set out after the fleeing remnants of the army. Among them were some who had been present at the battle of Abu 'Ubayd's bridge; they gathered a great deal of booty and raided as far as-Sâbât, then they turned back and joined al-Muthanna. The importance of the battle of al-Buwayb lay not only in boosting morale after the defeat at the bridge, but also in giving the Muslims control over the entire region between the two rivers. They had been fighting no further than the Euphrates, then they fought in the region between the Euphrates and the Tigris. After al-Buwayb they were in full control of this region which extended between the Euphrates and the Tigris. They could travel throughout the whole region without fearing any enemy.⁵⁰ The battle of al-Buwayb was akin to the battle of al-Yarmook in Syria.⁵¹

1.4.6. The Persian reaction

Events such as these could not happen without there being some repercussions among the ruling circles of Persia. The Persian leaders got together and spoke to Rustam and Fayrazân, saying: "Why are you so divided that you have weakened the Persians and encouraged their enemies? By Allah, nothing has brought this

⁴⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352.

⁵⁰ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/293.

⁵¹ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah Khilâfah 'Umar*, p. 93.

weakness upon us but you, O' commanders. You have divided the people of Persia and distracted them from their enemies. After Baghdad, Sâbât and Takrit there is nothing left but al-Madâ'in. By Allah, you will unite, or we will start with you before anyone can rejoice in our misfortune. By Allah, were it not that killing you may lead to our own doom, we would have hastened to kill you now. If you do not give up (this division), we will kill you, then let us be doomed after we have had the satisfaction of killing you."⁵²

After that, Rustam and Fayrazân went to Boorân and said to her: "Write to the wives and concubines of Chosroes and the wives and concubines of the family of Chosroes for us." So she did that and wrote a letter for them. They sent word, asking them to come, and they brought them all and handed them over to some men to torture them and make them tell them of any male child of Chosroes. They did not find any of them with these women, except that one of them said that there was no one left except a boy called Yazdagird, who was a son of Shahriyar the son of Chosroes; his mother was from the people of Baduria. They sent people after her and caught her, and demanded to know where he was. When the women were gathered together, his paternal uncle Sheerawayh was in the white palace and killed all the males of the family of Chosroes, seventeen brothers, so that no one would compete for the throne of Persia. She had smuggled him out and hidden him with his maternal uncles in Istakhar. Among those whom Sheerawayh killed was his brother Shahriyâr the son of Chosroes Barweez from his favourite wife Shireen. He was the father of this Yazdagird. They put pressure on the mother of Yazdagird and she told them where he was. They sent for him and brought him on the basis that he was the sole remaining male of the family of Sâsân (the Sasanids), and they appointed him as king. He was twenty-one years old, and they united around him and

⁵² *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/300.

all the Persians accepted him and competed in obeying him and supporting him. They thought that this was a way out of their dilemma.⁵³ Yazdagird III started to exercise his authority with the help of Rustam and Fayrazân. They renewed the border posts of Chosroes and appointed troops to each post and to al-Heerah, al-Anbâr and al-Ablah.⁵⁴

1.4.7. 'Umar's instructions to al-Muthanna

News of the movements of Yazdagird III reached al-Muthanna, details of which were brought by his spies. He wrote to 'Umar, telling him of these events and of the expected counter-attack. Al-Muthanna's prediction proved true, for the letter did not reach 'Umar before the people of the area between the two rivers turned *kâfir*, broke their treaty, and revolted against the Muslims. The Persians hastened their attack and marched to fight when those *ahl adh-dhimmah* revolted. When al-Muthanna saw that, he realized that he had advanced too far and had occupied a greater area than his forces could keep control of, so his occupation could not last. So he withdrew with his guards until he reached Dhu Qâr, and the people stayed in one camp in at-Ṭaff. 'Umar was more cautious, and his letter reached them, saying: "Get out from among the Persians and go to the desert and scatter among the oases that are near the border with the Persians, on the border between your land and their land. Do not leave anyone of Rabee'ah or any of the fighters or horsemen of Muḍar and their allies without bringing them with you; if they come willingly, all well and good, otherwise use force. Stay close to the border between your land and theirs, until you receive further instructions."⁵⁵

⁵³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/301; *at-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 467.

⁵⁴ *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 468.

⁵⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/301.

Al-Muthanna camped in Dhu Qār and the Muslims spread out in al-Jull and Sharāf, as far as Ghudā.⁵⁶ The forces scattered throughout the oases, from one end of the Iraq desert to the other, from Ghudā to al-Qaṭqāṭānah there were posts from which they could see one another and help one another if anything happened, watching and waiting for a new campaign. At the same time, the posts of Chosroes were on alert and the Persians were ready, but they were nervous and worried about a Muslim attack. The Muslims were eager to fight but their commanders were holding them back, following 'Umar's instructions and waiting for reinforcements. That was at the end of Dhu al-Qa'dah 13 A.H./January 635 C.E.⁵⁷ 'Umar said: "By Allah, I will send the kings of the Arabs to fight against the kings of the Persians."

Then the first thing that he did was to write to his agents who were in charge of the small towns and tribes. That was in Dhu al-Hijjah, at the time when the pilgrims were setting out for Ḥajj. The first tribes whose routes led to Makkah and Madeenah came to him, as did those who were on the road to Iraq, who were nearer to Madeenah. They came to him in Madeenah on the way back from Ḥajj and told him about those who were in Iraq. Those whose routes were close to Iraq joined al-Muthanna. 'Umar did not leave any leader, or any man of wisdom, noble position or power, or any *khateeb* or poet, but he sent him against them. He sent the most prominent of people against them.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Mountains in the direction of Baṣra. [Author]

⁵⁷ *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, 470.

⁵⁸ *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 471.

2. The Battle of al-Qâdisiyah

When 'Umar found out that the Persians were making preparations and were gathering to eradicate the small number of Muslim forces remaining in Iraq, he issued orders for compulsory conscription, because the situation required that. Hence he commanded al-Muthanna to look at the tribes around him and see who was fit and able to fight and to bring them, willingly or otherwise. This was the compulsory conscription which 'Umar deemed essential, and he was the first one to do that in Islam. This shows that Muhammad Faraj, the author of *al-'Askariyah al-Islâmiyah*, was mistaken when he said that compulsory conscription first appeared at the time of the Umayyads. 'Umar issued the command for compulsory conscription and his command was carried out. No sooner had the caliph's letter reached al-Muthanna but he started to implement the orders contained therein immediately, according to the plan which 'Umar had drawn up for his movements. 'Umar sent word to his governors telling them not to leave anyone who had a weapon, horse, physical strength or wisdom, but to send them to him. He ordered them to recruit people by force and asked them to send the new recruits to Iraq.⁵⁹

The situation in Persia changed with the arrival of Yazdagird as ruler, and the situation of the Persians was as follows: There was now internal stability as the result of Yazdagird's appointment and the people's uniting around him. The Persians felt reassured and confident, and their leaders competed in obeying and supporting him. They announced a general conscription which included everyone whom the Persians could recruit; they distributed groups of soldiers throughout the land that had been conquered by the Muslims.

⁵⁹ *Imâm al-Wafa'*, p. 70.

Finally they provoked the local population and incited them against the Muslims, until they broke their treaty, renounced Muslim protection and rebelled against them.⁶⁰

The situation of the Muslims changed and became as follows:

Withdrawal

Al-Muthanna and the other leaders left, withdrawing from among the Persians and leaving the lands they had conquered. They withdrew and dispersed among the oases on the border between the Arab and Persian lands. Al-Muthanna camped at Dhu Qâr, and the rest of the people camped in at-Ṭaff. They set up posts in Iraq where they could see one another and come to one another's aid if needed.

The compulsory conscription among the Muslims balanced out the compulsory conscription among the Persians.⁶¹

2.1. Appointment of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs as commander in Iraq

This was the third stage in the conquest of Iraq, which started with the appointment of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (ؓ) as commander of the jihad in Iraq in 14 A.H. That year — 14 A.H. — began with 'Umar urging the people to engage in jihad against the Persians. On the first day of Muḥarram he rode out from Madeenah at the head of the armies and camped at an oasis called Ṣirâr.⁶² He camped there, planning to lead the attack on Iraq himself. He left 'Alī ibn Abi Ṭālib in charge of Madeenah during his absence, and took with him 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and the leaders of the *Ṣaḥâbah*. Then he held a

⁶⁰ *Ḥarakat al-Faṭḥ al-Islâmi*. p. 80.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ṣirâr: A place three miles from Madeenah. *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, 3/398.

council to consult the *Ṣaḥābah* about what he was planning to do. The call went out, *aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin), and he sent for 'Ali, who came from Madeenah. Then he consulted them and they all agreed that he should go to Iraq, except 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, who said to him: "I fear that if anything happens to you, the Muslims will become weak in all regions of the land. I think that you should send a man and return to Madeenah." 'Umar and the people decided that Ibn 'Awf was right, and 'Umar asked: "Who do you think I should send to Iraq?" He said, "You have already found him." He then asked, "Who is he?" He said, "The lion in his den: Sa'd ibn Mâlik az-Zuhri (i.e., Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ)." 'Umar liked the idea and sent for Sa'd, whom he appointed as commander in Iraq.⁶³

2.1.1. 'Umar's advice to Sa'd

When Sa'd (ؓ) came to Madeenah, 'Umar appointed him as commander of the war in Iraq, and said to him: "O' Sa'd, do not think that you will be fine just because you are the maternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ؓ). Allah does not erase what is bad by something else that is bad, rather He erases what is bad by something that is good. There is no relationship between Allah and anyone except through obedience to Him. The people, noble and ignoble alike, are all equal before Allah. Allah is their Lord and they are His slaves, and their criterion for superiority is being sound. They attain what is with Him by means of obedience. Look at the way of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) from the time he was sent until he left us, and adhere to it, for it is the proper way. This is my advice to you. If you ignore it and turn away from it, you will be one of the losers."⁶⁴ This is eloquent advice from

⁶³ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bid'ayah wa an-Nihayah*, p. 96.

⁶⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/306.

a great and wise caliph. 'Umar understood the weak point that could affect Sa'd, which is that he thought that he would be fine because of his close relationship to the Prophet (ﷺ), which might make him feel somewhat proud towards other Muslims. So 'Umar reminded him of the general Islamic principle which is that the criterion of honour for a Muslim in this life — as Allah their Lord said, and they are His slaves — is being sound, and they can only attain what is with Him by obeying Him. Being sound means being free of diseases of the heart, as if he is saying that superiority is achieved by keeping away from sin and by obeying Allah. This is the *taqwa* (piety, fear of Allah) which Allah has made the criterion of honour, as He (ﷻ) says:

﴿... Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that [believer] who has *at-Taḳwa* [i.e. he is one of the *Muttaqoon* (the pious)]...﴾
(*Qur'an* 49: 13)

This is a just and merciful criterion, which every Muslim can attain if he strives to seek the pleasure of Allah and happiness in the Hereafter. Then at the end of this advice, 'Umar mentioned the importance of adhering to the way of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which includes adhering to the religion as a whole and applying it to the people.⁶⁵

2.1.2. Other advice

Then the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) advised Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ again, when he wanted to send him, saying: "I have appointed you in charge of the war in Iraq, so heed my advice. You are going to face something difficult, and nothing can save you from it except the truth. Accustom yourself and those who are with you to doing good, start everything with good, and remember that for every

⁶⁵ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/362.

good habit there is a means to develop it. The means of developing good is patience. If you are patient in bearing everything that befalls you or happens to you, you will gain fear of Allah. Remember that fear of Allah is a combination of two things: obeying Him and avoiding disobedience. Those who obey Him do so by hating this world and loving the Hereafter, and those who disobey Him do so by loving this world and hating the Hereafter. The signs of faith are instilled by Allah in the heart; some are hidden and some are visible. As for that which is visible, it is when the one who praises a person and the one who criticizes him on the basis of truth are the same to him. As for that which is hidden, it may be manifested in wisdom flowing from his heart on his tongue and people's love for him. Do not think little of how important it is for people to love you, for the Prophets asked that people should love them. When Allah loves a person He makes others love him too, and when He hates a person He makes others hate him too. You should think of your status before Allah by checking your status before the people who are with you in this cause."⁶⁶

From this text we learn a number of things, including the following:

Adhering to the truth saves the Muslim from difficulties, because the one who adheres to the truth is with Allah, and if a person is with Allah, Allah will be with Him by His support and help. These feelings will give the Muslim a strong motivation to double his efforts and confront difficulties and hardships, in addition to peace of mind which is enjoyed by the one who adheres to the truth in word and deed. That is in contrast to the one who deviates from the path of truth, who feels anxious and suffers many kinds of pain, such as a guilty conscience and the fear that people will find him out, as well as the fear of unknown consequences of deviation.

⁶⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/306, 307.

'Umar stated that the means of attaining goodness is patience, because the path of goodness is not paved with carpets, rather it is rough and thorny, and travelling it requires a great deal of struggle (jihad). So the one who wants to travel this road must equip himself with patience, otherwise he will give up partway.

'Umar said that fear of Allah means obeying Him and avoiding disobedience, then he explained the greatest motive that will make a man obey Him, which is hatred of this world and love of the Hereafter. The greatest motive that makes a man disobey Allah is love of this world and hatred of the Hereafter.

Then he said that hearts have signs of faith, and he gave the example of dealing with people on the basis of truth when one is angry and when one is content. A man should not let people's praise make him try to please them by turning away from the truth, or let their criticism of him make him mistreat them or be unfair towards them.

'Umar stated that one of the hidden signs of faith in the heart is wisdom that flows from the Muslim's heart on his tongue, and that he is loved by his Muslim brothers. For Allah's love of His slave is connected to the Muslims' love for him; when Allah loves a person He makes him beloved to His slaves.⁶⁷ If Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqās, who the Prophet (ﷺ) had testified was one of the people of Paradise, needed this advice, then how about us, who have so much less understanding of Islam and are falling so far short in applying it?⁶⁸

2.1.3. A *Khutbah* (sermon) by 'Umar (رضي الله عنه)

Sa'd went to Iraq, accompanied by four thousand *Mujāhideen*, or it was said that there were six thousand. 'Umar walked out with

⁶⁷ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/364.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 10/365.

them to bid farewell from Şirâr as far as al-A'waş.⁶⁹ Then he stood up to address the people and said: "Allah sets similitudes for you, and uses different figures of speech to revive your hearts, for hearts are dead until Allah revives them. Whoever knows something, let him benefit from it, for there are signs and consequences of justice. Its signs are modesty, generosity, gentleness and softness, and its consequence is mercy. For every matter Allah has made a way of dealing with it and a means of achieving it. The door to justice is learning lessons, and its key is asceticism. Learning lessons means remembering death by thinking about the dead and preparing for death by sending on good deeds. Asceticism means taking dues from everyone who owes them and giving them to everyone who is entitled to them, without making any concession to anyone in that and being content with what is sufficient of basic necessities, for if a person is not content with the basic necessities, nothing will make him feel independent of means. Allah has obliged me to deal with supplications on His behalf, so bring your complaints to us. Whoever cannot do that should bring them to one who will convey them to us, and we will restore his rights without him having to do much."⁷⁰

2.1.4. Sa'd's arrival in Iraq and the death of al-Muthanna

Sa'd travelled with his army until he stopped in a place called Zarood⁷¹ in Najd. The caliph sent four thousand men as reinforcements, and Sa'd was able to mobilize a further seven thousand from Najd. Al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah ash-Shaybânî was

⁶⁹ Al-A'waş: On the road towards Iraq. It is where the airport of Madeenah is located today. [Author]

⁷⁰ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/308.

⁷¹ Zarood: Sands between ath-Tha'labiyah and al-Khuzaymiyah on the pilgrims' route from Iraq.

waiting for him in Iraq with twelve thousand.

Sa'd stayed in Zarood, preparing for the decisive battle with the Persians, and waiting for the command of the caliph 'Umar (ؓ). 'Umar took a keen interest in this battle and did not leave any commander, wise man, nobleman, powerful person, orator or poet but he sent them against the Persians. He sent the most prominent and powerful people against them.⁷² Whilst Sa'd and his army were encamped in Zarood, al-Muthanna became gravely ill. The narrators say that the wounds he had received on the day of the bridge reopened and started bleeding, and he realized that the end was near. As his pain grew intense, he appointed Basheer ibn al-Khaṣāṣiyah to be in charge of those who were with him after he died. Al-Muthanna asked for his brother al-Mu'anna, and told him his last wishes, and asked him to convey them to Sa'd. Then al-Muthanna surrendered his soul to his Creator, and this sun that had filled the conquests of Iraq with bright light finally set.⁷³

In his final advice to Sa'd, he told him not to fight his enemy and the enemy of the Muslims when they were mobilized to the fullest extent in their own land; rather he should fight them on the borders of their land, close to the land of the Arabs and close to refuge from the land of the Persians. If Allah granted the Muslims victory over the Persians, they would be able to capture all the land that lay behind them, and if the outcome was otherwise, they would be able to retreat and join the other Muslims. Then they would have better knowledge of the routes and would feel more courageous in their own land, until Allah turned things around in their favour.⁷⁴

How similar were the last moments of al-Muthanna to the last

⁷² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/310.

⁷³ *Al-Qādisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Ādil Kamāl, p. 29.

⁷⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/313.

moments of the caliph Abu Bakr (ؓ). Both of them left this world when they were thinking of the Muslims and giving advice concerning conquests. Abu Bakr died when he was advising 'Umar and encouraging the people to conquer Iraq, and al-Muthanna died when he was passing on the fruits of his experience in war against the Persians to the new leader of the war in Iraq, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs. As he breathed his last, he was thinking, planning and giving advice to Sa'd.⁷⁵

When the advice and suggestions of al-Muthanna reached Sa'd, he prayed for mercy for him, and issued instructions that al-Mu'anna ibn al-Hârithah be kept in his position, and that the members of his household be taken care of.⁷⁶ It is worth noting that al-Muthanna left instructions that his wife, Salma bint Khaṣṣfah at-Taymiyah should marry Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs; Sa'd proposed to her after her *'iddah* was over and married her. Did al-Muthanna want to be kind to his wife after he had passed away by letting her marry a great hero, one of the heroes of Islam whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had testified as one of the people of Paradise? Or was it that she was intelligent and wise, and had knowledge of her husband's experience in war, and he wanted to benefit the Muslims thereby? Both are possible. This is a small example of the abundant virtues of that great generation.⁷⁷

2.1.5. Sa'd's march to Iraq and 'Umar's advice

The command came from the caliph to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (may Allah be pleased with them) to set out from Zarood to Iraq in preparation for the decisive battle with the Persians. 'Umar also sent

⁷⁵ *Al-Qâdisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl, p. 30.

⁷⁶ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/313.

⁷⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/370, 371.

the following advice:

"I am ordering you and the troops who are with you to fear Allah in all circumstances, for fear of Allah is the best weapon against the enemy and the strongest weapon in war. I am commanding you and those who are with you to be more careful in avoiding sin than in avoiding your enemy, for the sins of the army are to be feared more than their enemy. The Muslims are supported by their enemy's disobedience towards Allah; were it not for that, we would not have any strength, for our numbers are not like theirs and our weapons are not like theirs. If we were equally matched in sin, they would have an advantage over us in strength, and if we did not have an advantage over them by our virtue, we would not be able to defeat them by our strength. Remember that you have over you protectors from Allah who know what you are doing, so feel shy before them and do not do any act of disobedience towards Allah. You are (striving) for the sake of Allah; do not say that our enemy is worse than us and will never prevail over us even if will commit sin. A people may be defeated by others who are worse than them, just as the Children of Israel were defeated by the *kāfir* Magians when they did deeds that angered Allah, and,

«... They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise [completely] fulfilled.» (Qur'an 17: 5)

Ask Allah for help against your evil whims and desires just as you ask Him for help against your enemies. I ask Allah for that, for us and for you. Be kind to the Muslims on their march. Do not exhaust them on their march, lest they reach their enemy weakened from their journey, for they are marching towards an enemy that has not been travelling, that has strong horses and riders. You and those who are with you should rest for one day and night every week, so that they will be able to regain their strength and lay down their weapons and

belongings. Do not camp near the towns of people who have a treaty with us or are under our protection, and do not let any of your companions interact with them except those whose religious commitment you are confident of. Do not annoy any of the townspeople at all, for they are protected and you are being tested with regard to fulfilment of the treaty, just as they are being tested with regard to their patience in adhering to it. So long as they are keeping their promise to you, keep your promise to them. Do not seek victory against your enemies by oppressing those with whom you have a treaty. When you reach the closest point of enemy land, spend out spies, for none of their affairs should be hidden from you. You should have with you Arabs and local people whom you trust and who you feel are sincere, for the news of a liar will be of no benefit to you, even if he tells the truth sometimes. The dishonest one is a spy against you, not for you. When you draw closer to the enemy's land you should send out scouts and raiding parties to cut their supply lines and try to find out their weak points. Choose people of wisdom and strength among your companions for these missions, and choose the best horses. If they see the enemy the best way to deal with them is by means of good advice from these people. Put the people of jihad, patience and toughness in charge of these raiding parties, and do not show favour to anyone on the basis of whims and desires, because this may affect the whole affair and lead to bad consequences. Do not send any scouts or raiding parties in a direction in which you fear they may be exposed to danger. If you sight the enemy, then bring back your scouts and troops. But do not hasten to engage in fighting unless you are forced to, until you have had the opportunity to find out their fatal weak points and have studied the land until you know it as well as its people do. If any prisoner is brought to you with whom you do not have a treaty, you should execute him so as to strike fear into your enemies and the enemies of Allah. Allah is the best disposer of affairs for you and those who are

with you; He is the One Who grants victory to you over your enemy, and Allah is the One Whose help we seek.”⁷⁸

This great speech contains useful advice and shows us an important aspect of 'Umar's greatness, namely his great experience in military planning. Divine help and guidance can clearly be seen in all his commands and advice.⁷⁹ We can sum up some of the important principles included in this advice, as follows:

- ❖ Commanding the army to fear Allah and be dutiful to Him in all situations. This is regarded as the primary weapon, and sin is regarded as the primary enemy, after which comes the *kāfir* enemy.
- ❖ Drawing attention to the fact that there were angels keeping a close and constant watch over the Islamic army, and pointing out the importance of feeling too shy before them to commit sin, because it makes no sense for a man to commit sin when he is in the battlefield fighting in jihad for the sake of Allah.
- ❖ Affirming that it is quite incorrect to take the enemy's behaviour as a standard to justify the behaviour of the Muslim army.
- ❖ Bearing in mind the constant need for Allah's help.

The second principle which was affirmed in 'Umar's letter to Sa'd is:

- ❖ Thinking constantly of Allah; emphasizing the sanctity of the towns whose people have a peace treaty with the Muslims and taking means to guarantee that their safety is not violated; protecting the Muslim image from any bad reflection that could affect the success of communication between Muslims and non-Muslims, by punishing crooked behaviour on the part of some Muslim individuals.

⁷⁸ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, Pp. 119, 120.

⁷⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/374.

In an effort to achieve this principle, 'Umar ordered his commander to pay attention to the means that could help to keep the army's morale high and help it to reach the land of the enemy still able to fight. He said: "Be kind to the Muslims during their march... so that they will be able to regain their strength and lay down their weapons and belongings." After affirming the importance of protecting and ensuring the safety of the troops and weapons of the Muslim army, 'Umar pointed out that prevention is better than cure, and that one of the most important weapons of the army is to appear with proper Islamic behaviour, in which words and deeds are in harmony. As a precaution, 'Umar forbade the army to camp near the towns of people with whom the Muslims had peace treaties, so as to avoid the possibility of some transgression that could negatively affect the relationships he wanted to establish, and so as not to allow anyone except those who were trustworthy to enter the towns, to ensure that the treaty would not be violated and to oblige the people to adhere to it.

'Umar's letter also pointed to a third principle, which was:

- ❖ Using different methods of dealing with people, depending on their relationship with the Muslims, and not burdening them with more than they could bear. 'Umar asked his commander not to oppress or mistreat the people with whom the Muslims had treaties for the sake of seeking victory over those with whom they were at war, and to seek the help of those whom he trusted of the people in regions that were close to the regions of conquest, on the basis that there should be some trust and confidence, i.e., he should be careful not to give full trust and not to go to extremes in trusting.

The fourth principle is gathering sufficient information about the enemy:

- ❖ 'Umar drew attention to the importance of relying on scouts from the best elements of the army in gathering information, and equipping them with the best weapons that the army possesses. That is because the enemy may discover them and force them to fight, so they should be strong and powerful so that they can create the desired psychological impact on the enemy, making them think that the army is strong and giving an impression of using force.

The fifth and last principle mentioned in 'Umar's letter is appointing the right man for the job:

- ❖ The aim of gathering information about the enemy is not so much for the purpose of fighting them as it is a precaution in case the other side forces the Muslims to fight. Hence after taking the means, the Muslims should refrain from fighting, but be prepared for that if necessary, whilst taking the utmost precautions.⁸⁰

2.1.6. Seeking the help of former apostates who had repented

During the Riddah wars and the conquests, Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (رضي الله عنه) did not seek the help of any former apostate, but 'Umar mobilized them after they repented and set their affairs straight, and acquired some Islamic education, but he did not appoint any of them to a position of authority.⁸¹ According to one report, he said to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ concerning Tulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi and 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib az-Zubaydi: "Seek their help, but do not appoint them over one hundred (men)."⁸² What we learn from the

⁸⁰ *Ad-Dawr as-Siyāsi li'l-Ṣafwah fee Ṣadr al-Islām*, p. 429.

⁸¹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/375.

⁸² *Ibid.*

actions of the two caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar⁸³ is that if a person apostatizes from Islam then repents and comes back, his repentance is accepted and his blood and wealth are protected; he has the same rights and duties as all other Muslims, except that he is not to be appointed to any position of authority over the Muslims' affairs, especially in matters of leadership. That is because it is possible that his repentance may be hypocritical, and if that is the case and he is appointed to a position of authority and leadership, he will cause great mischief in the land and upset the balance of life; he will bring in others who are like him of the hypocrites and push away the sincere believers, and the Islamic society will become a society that is dominated by the characteristics of *Jāhiliyah*. This wise policy of these two Rightly-Guided Caliphs was aimed at protecting the Muslim society from evildoers sneaking in to positions of leadership. Perhaps the reason for this policy was also a means of making the punishment go against what they (the former apostates) had tried to achieve and of deterring anyone who might be tempted to rebel against Islamic principles and seek a position of leadership by means of opposing Islam and befriending the enemies of the faith.⁸⁴

2.1.7. A letter from the caliph to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs received a letter from 'Umar whilst he was camping in Shirâf, on the border of Iraq, ordering him to march towards Persia. In this letter it said: "March from Shirâf towards Persia, with the Muslims who are with you. Put your trust in Allah and seek His help in all your affairs. Remember that you are going towards a nation whose numbers are great and whose weapons are superior; they are tough people in a forbidding land, which although

⁸³ *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Manâqib 'Umar*, chapter 52, hadith no. 3742.

⁸⁴ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/376.

it is a plain will be difficult to conquer because there are many lakes, running water and vast valleys. Unless you meet small groups of them, if you encounter the people or some of them, then strike them first. Beware of giving them time to wait for reinforcements after the first confrontation. Do not be deceived, because they are cheaters and deceivers. You have to take them very seriously and deal with them in a decisive manner. When you reach al-Qâdisiyah⁸⁵, set up posts at the edge of al-Qâdisiyah and let the people (i.e. the Muslims) be between the wilderness and the inhabited land, on the plain between the two. Then stay where you are and do not leave, for if they realize that you are there, they will strike you with all their might, with their cavalry and infantry. If you show patience in facing your enemy and seek reward with Allah when fighting him, intending to do your duty, then I have great hope that you will prevail over them. After that, they will never again be able to assemble such a huge army, and if they do, they will be in such a state of fear that they will lose courage. If the outcome is otherwise, then you will have the wilderness behind you and you can depart from the closest inhabited part of their land to the closest uninhabited part of your land, where you will feel more confident and have more knowledge of the land, and they will be more fearful.”

This advice concerning the choice of land where the army was to settle is similar to the advice given by al-Muthanna to Sa‘d. ‘Umar and al-Muthanna were agreed on the choice of land. Al-Muthanna’s advice was the result of more than three years experience of war against the Persians. This is indicative of ‘Umar’s brilliance in military planning, even though he had never set foot in Iraq. This advice also urged the army to keep away from the enemy’s reach whilst sending raiding parties to harass them and incite their

⁸⁵ Al-Qâdisiyah was the gateway to Persia during the *Jâhiliyah*.

followers against them, until the Muslims could bring them to a place of their own choosing for the major battle.⁸⁶

2.1.8. Spiritual means of victory according to 'Umar (ؓ)

'Umar wrote to Sa'd, reminding him of the spiritual means of victory, which were the most important. In his letter he said: "Pay a great deal of attention to your heart (spiritual well-being). Talk to your troops, exhort them and remind them of the importance of good intentions and of checking on themselves. Patience, patience, for the help of Allah comes in accordance with good intentions, and the reward comes in accordance with how much one checks oneself. Be careful as you are on this mission for His sake, ask Allah to keep you safe and sound, and frequently repeat the words *Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah." Write and tell me where you have reached with your army, for my lack of knowledge of your situation and that of your enemy is keeping me from writing some of the things I wanted to write. Describe to us the routes of the Muslims and the land that lies between you and al-Madâ'in, so that it is as if I can see it, and give me a clear picture of your situation. Fear Allah and put your hope in Him, and do not take anything for granted. Remember that Allah has made a promise to you. Put your trust in Allah with regard to the mission you are embarking on, and beware lest you be removed from this position and replaced with someone else."⁸⁷

In this letter, 'Umar advised Sa'd to pay attention to the heart (spiritual well-being), for the heart is the engine of the body; if it is sound the entire body will be sound. Then he advised him to exhort

⁸⁶ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/379.

⁸⁷ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/315.

his troops and remind them to be sincere towards Allah and to seek reward with Him. He explained that the help of Allah is connected to that, and he warned him against being negligent towards the responsibility that he had undertaken and the conquests that lay ahead. He reminded them of the importance of being connected to Allah and that their strength was connected to His. He advised the Muslim commander to tread a path between fear of Allah and hope for that which is with Him. This is an important attitude which reflects a deep understanding of *Tawḥeed*. He told him not to take anything for granted because of some righteous deed that he did or because some people praised him. And he reminded him that Allah had promised victory to the Muslims and the destruction of *kufṛ*. He warned him against being negligent concerning any means of victory, for victory might not be granted to him, rather it might be granted to others whom Allah chose.⁸⁸

2.1.9. Sa'd's description of the location of al-Qâdisiyah to 'Umar and 'Umar's response

Sa'd wrote to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) describing to him the land where he expected the decisive battle to take place. He said: "All of those who have entered into peace treaties with the Muslims in the land between the two rivers are supporting the Persians. They have submitted to them and are preparing to fight us. The one whom they have chosen to fight us is Rustam, among others like him. They are trying to annoy us and make us engage in skirmishes, and we are trying to annoy them and provoke them. The decree of Allah will inevitably come to pass and His will is to be submitted to, whether it is in our favour or not. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound."⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/379.

⁸⁹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/38.

'Umar wrote to him, saying: "I have received and understood your letter. Stay where you are until Allah brings your enemy to you, and remember that this confrontation is going to be decisive. If Allah enables you to defeat them, do not stop there, carry on until you conquer al-Madâ'in, for it will be destroyed if Allah wills."⁹⁰

From 'Umar's letter it is clear that he had taken the right decision, which was that Sa'd should stay put and not leave his position. He should not hasten to fight the enemy, rather he should leave it to the enemy to initiate the fighting. He should invest his victory by pursuing the enemy to al-Madâ'in and conquering it.⁹¹ At the same time he should take the material means necessary to achieving victory.

'Umar did not ignore the spiritual aspects of the matter. He launched a psychological war against the enemy in their own land, the seat of their rule and power. He sent word to Sa'd saying: "I have a strong feeling that when you meet the enemy you will defeat them. Then if any one of you makes a gesture or speaks a word of safety (to one of the Persians) then this man should be granted security, because even if it is done by mistake, fulfilling the promise is a means of achieving victory and breaking a promise, even if it is done by mistake, is a means that leads to defeat, which will weaken you and strengthen your enemy."⁹²

It is as if 'Umar was living with the Muslim army with all his senses. He became so worried that he could not enjoy life or relax until he had heard news of them. In such cases inspiration from Allah was a means of reducing the great burden that 'Umar had undertaken, and a means of making the Muslims steadfast and strengthening their

⁹⁰ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/38.

⁹¹ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 253.

⁹² *Itmâm al-Wafa' fee Seerat al-Khulafâ'*, p. 73.

hearts. We see that 'Umar reminded the Muslims of some of the spiritual means by urging them to adhere to the word of honour, to be truthful in speech and to fulfil promises, even if that was granted by an individual Muslim, or if there had been a misunderstanding and the Muslim did not intend to grant security but the enemy understood it as such.⁹³

2.2. 'Umar asked Sa'd to send a delegation to debate with the Persian king

'Umar said to Sa'd in his letters: "Do not feel distressed by what you hear about them and what they come up with. Seek the help of Allah and put your trust in Him. Send to him some men of wisdom and courage to call them to Allah." 'Umar asked Sa'd to write to him every day⁹⁴. Sa'd started to gather some men of wisdom and courage. Those whom he chose were men of understanding and wisdom:

1. An-Nu'mān ibn Muqrin al-Muzani
2. Bisr ibn Abi Rahm al-Juhani
3. Ḥamlah ibn Juwayh al-Kināni
4. Ḥandhalah ibn ar-Rabee' at-Tameemi
5. Furāt ibn Ḥayyān al-'Ajali
6. 'Adiyy ibn Suhayl
7. Al-Mugheerah ibn Zarārah ibn an-Nabāsh ibn Ḥabeeb⁹⁵

⁹³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/381.

⁹⁴ See: *al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/38.

⁹⁵ See: *Ad-Da'wah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by Ḥusni Muhammad Ibrāheem.

'Umar chose a group who were dignified and good-looking, and who had deep insight:

1. 'Aṭārīd ibn Ḥāḥīb at-Tameemi
2. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi
3. Al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥassān adh-Dhuhali
4. 'Aṣīm ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi
5. 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib az-Zubaydi
6. Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah ath-Thaqafi
7. Al-Mu'anna ibn Ḥārithah ash-Shaybāni⁹⁶

These were fourteen *dā'iyaḥs* whom Sa'd sent to call the king of Persia to Islam, acting on the orders of 'Umar (ﷺ). They were leaders of their people, as 'Umar (ﷺ) wanted, who would be able to call Yazdagird with wisdom and beautiful preaching, in a way that is best, in the hope that Allah might guide him and his troops to Islam and thus avoid bloodshed on both sides. This carefully selected delegation was of a high caliber and able for the task for which they had been appointed. In addition to the qualities that they enjoyed of good looks, dignity and wisdom, they also had previous knowledge of the Persians. Some of them had fought them, defeated them and engaged in battles with them in previous campaigns, some of them had gone in delegations to the Persian kings during the *Jāhiliyah*, and some of them know the Persian language. It is as if Sa'd chose them for this delegation after they had passed a kind of test to prove that they were qualified for the mission, as well as a kind of physical exam to determine their strengths and weaknesses, and their level of fitness and good looks.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ See: *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/101.

⁹⁷ See: *Al-Qādisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Ādil Kamāl, p. 70.

This blessed delegation, led by an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin, reached al-Madâ'in and entered to meet the Persian king Yazdagird, who asked them, through his translator: "What brought you here? What motivated you to invade us and penetrate so deeply into our land? Is it because we were distracted from you that you were encouraged to attack us?" An-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin spoke on their behalf, and said: "Allah had mercy on us and sent to us a Messenger who commanded us to do good and forbade us to do evil, and promised us, if we responded, the good of this world and the Hereafter. There was no tribe but some of them responded and others did not. Then he commanded us to start with those of the Arabs who opposed him, so we started with them, and they either joined him unwillingly then became happy that they had joined him, or they joined him willingly and were blessed. We all recognized the superiority of what he brought over what we had been living with of enmity and hardship. Then he commanded us to start with the nations that were closest to us, and we called them to justice. We are calling you to our religion, which is a religion that recognizes what is good and confirms it as such, and recognizes what is evil and confirms it as such. If you refuse, then you may choose one of the bad options rather than the worst option: *jizyah*, but if you refuse, then fighting. If you respond to our religion, we will leave with you the Book of Allah, on condition that you rule by its rulings, and we will leave you and let you run your affairs in your land. If you pay the *jizyah* we will accept it from you and leave you to run your own affairs. If you pay the *jizyah* we will accept it from you and will protect you, otherwise we will fight you."

The Persian king Yazdagird said: "I do not know of any nation on earth that was more miserable and fewer in number and more divided than you. We used to delegate some of the tribes on the border to take care of you. You never hoped to stand up to Persia. If you think you can defeat us, that is folly on your part. If you are going

through hardship, we will give you some food until things get easier, and we will honour your leaders and clothe you, and we will appoint a king to be kind to you."

Al-Mugheerah ibn Zarârah stood up and said: "As for what you have said about our bad situation, that is true and it was even worse than that," and he mentioned the miserable life of the Arabs and how Allah had showed mercy to them by sending the Prophet (ﷺ), as an-Nu'mân had said. Then he said: "Choose, either pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29) or fight, or else save yourselves by becoming Muslims."

Yazdagird said: "Were it not that envoys are not to be killed, I would have killed you. I have nothing for you." Then he ordered that a load of dust be brought and he told his people: "Put this on their nobles, and drive them out of al-Madâ'in." Âsim ibn 'Amr stood up and said: "I am the noblest of them," and he took the dust and went out to his mount and rode off. When he reached Sa'd he said to him, "Be of good cheer, for by Allah, Allah has given us the keys to their kingdom."⁹⁸ Then Rustam came out with his huge army, one hundred thousand strong or more, from Sâbât. When he passed by Kootha — a town between al-Madâ'in and Bâbil — he met an Arab man. Rustam asked him: "What brought you here? What do you want from us?" He said, "We have come seeking the promise of Allah, that we will take possession of your land and sons if you refuse to submit." Rustam said, "Then we are placed under your control." The Arab said, "Your deeds let you down, so Allah put you under our control. Do not be deceived by what you see around you, for you are not confronting people, rather you are confronting the divine decree!" Rustam got angry with him and killed him. When his army passed al-Baras — a town between al-Koofah and al-Hillah, they

⁹⁸ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/43.

seized its people and its wealth, and drank wine, and raped the women. The people of al-Baras complained to Rustam and he said to his people: "By Allah, that Arab spoke the truth. By Allah, nothing let us down but our own deeds. By Allah, even though they are in a state of war, the Arabs treated these people better than you are treating them."⁹⁹

When Sa'd, the commander of the Muslim army, got news of Rustam, he sent 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib az-Zubaydi and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, along with ten other men, to find out about the army. They had not gone very far when they saw the enemy camp spread out along the banks of the river. They all went back apart from Ṭulayḥah, who continued until he had penetrated deeply among the enemy and gathered more information. Then he went back to Sa'd and told him what he had found out. This Ṭulayḥah had been one of the leaders of the apostates, but 'Umar allowed the Arabs who had apostatized and then repented to join the jihad, whereas Abu Bakr had not allowed that. But 'Umar did not allow those former leaders of apostasy who went out for jihad after having repented to be appointed to positions of leadership. He was keen for them to be disciplined and to learn the meanings of faith and piety, and he gave them valuable opportunities to express the sincerity of their faith and piety. Ṭulayḥah al-Asadi and 'Amr az-Zubaydi played an important role in the wars in Iraq and Persia.

2.3. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ sent delegations to call Rustam to Islam

Rustam travelled with his army from al-Ḥeerah until he reached al-Qâdisiyah at the bridge called al-'Ateeq, facing the

⁹⁹ *Itmâm al-Wafa' fee Seerat al-Khulafa'*, p. 57.

Muslim camp, with the river in between them. The Persians had thirty-three elephants with them. When they camped, he sent word to Sa'd saying, "Send us a man with whom we may speak." He sent Rab'i ibn 'Âmir, who came to him and found him sitting on a throne of gold, with carpets and cushions interwoven with gold thread. Rab'i came riding his horse, with his sword in a sheath of cloth and his spear tied around with cloth. When he reached the carpets, he made his horse step over them, then he dismounted and tied his horse with two pillows that he tore apart. Then he took the saddlecloth and wrapped it around himself (like a cloak). They gestured to him that he should put down his weapon. He said, "If I had come to you on my own initiative, I would do what you ask, but you are the ones who called me." Then he came, leaning on his spear and taking small steps so as to do more damage to the carpet on which he was walking. When he came near to Rustam, he sat on the ground and stuck his spear into the carpet, and said, "We do not sit on your furniture." Rustam asked him: "What brought you here?" He said, "Allah brought us here. He has sent us to bring whomsoever He wills from the worship of other people to the worship of Allah, from the constriction of this world to its ease, and from the injustice of other religions to the justice of Islam. He sent to us His Messenger, bringing His religion to His creation. Whoever accepts it, we will accept that and leave him and his land alone, but whoever refuses, we will fight him until we end up either in Paradise or in victory."¹⁰⁰

Rustam said: "We have heard what you said. Can you give us some time to think about it?" He said, "Yes, one of the things that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) taught us is not to give the enemies more than three days. So we will leave you alone for three days. Think about it and choose one of three options: either become Muslim, and

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/106.

we will leave you and your land alone; or pay the *jizyah* and we will accept it and leave you alone, and if you need us we will come to your help; or fight on the fourth day, unless you start it before then. I guarantee that to you on behalf of my companions.” Rustam asked, “Are you their leader?” He said, “No, but the Muslims are like a single body, part of one another, and the highest of them accepts a commitment made by the lowest of them.”

Then he went away, and Rustam consulted with his companions and said, “Have you ever heard anything like what this man has said?” They tried to make little of him, but Rustam said: “Woe to you, I am thinking of his wisdom, eloquence and behaviour. The Arabs do not care about clothes but they pay a great deal of attention to lineage.”

On the second day, he sent word to Sa’d asking him, “Send this man to us again.” But he sent Ḥudhayfah ibn Miḥṣan al-Ghalfāni, who did not say or do anything different than Rab’i had, and no wonder, for they were cast from the same mould, namely the religion of Islam. Rustam said to him: “Why didn’t the first one come to us?” He said, “Our commander treats us equally in times of hardship and times of ease, and today it is my turn.” Rustam said, “How long do we have?” He said, “Three days, starting from yesterday.”

On the third day, he sent word to Sa’d saying, “Send us a man.” So he sent al-Mugheerah ibn Shu’bah to him. He went to him and sat with him on his throne, but the courtiers rushed to him and pulled him away. He said to them, “We used to hear a great deal about your wisdom, but I have never seen any people more foolish than you. We Arabs do not enslave one another. We thought that you treated one another equally as we do. I wish that you had told me that some of you act like the masters of others. You cannot continue like this, for a kingdom based on such an attitude cannot last.” The

common folk said, "The Arab is speaking the truth, by Allah." The chieftains — the leaders of the peasants — said: "This is the kind of idea that our slaves are longing to hear. May Allah curse our predecessors, for they kept making little of this nation." Then Rustam spoke in a belittling manner of the Arabs, and exaggerated about the Persians, mentioning the miserable and difficult lives that they (the Arabs) led.¹⁰¹

Al-Mugheerah said: "As for what you have said about our miserable situation and division, we admit it and do not deny it. But things in this world do not last forever, and after hardship comes ease. If you did give thanks for what Allah has given you, your gratitude was too little in comparison to what you were given. Your lack of gratitude led to the decline in your situation. Allah sent among us a Messenger", then he said something similar to what the others had said, and he concluded by giving them the choice between accepting Islam, paying the *jizyah* or fighting.¹⁰²

Rustam consulted with the Persians and said, "Who are they in comparison to you? The first two came and boldly figured you out, then this one came with the same approach. They have all followed the same method and acted in the same way. By Allah, these are real men whether they are sincere or are liars. By Allah, if their discipline and their way of keeping secrets has reached such a level that they all have the same approach, never differing, there are no people who are able to achieve what they want like them. If they are sincere, no one will be able to stand up to them." Then the people started shouting and arguing.

¹⁰¹ See: *al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/108.

¹⁰² Ibid.

2.4. Preparation for battle

The Persians were not convinced by this call, and they got carried away in their stubbornness that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained (cf. Qur'an 8: 42). The Persians gathered to fight, and the Muslims prepared themselves for that. The Persians crossed the river at al-'Ateeq, and Rustam drew up his huge army in the following order:

- ❖ At the core: Dhu al-Hâjib, with eighteen elephants carrying boxes and men
- ❖ To the right of the core: al-Jâlinus
- ❖ On the right flank: al-Hormuzân, with seven or eight elephants carrying boxes and men
- ❖ To the left of the core: al-Beerazân
- ❖ On the left flank: Mahrân, with seven or eight elephants carrying boxes and men

Rustam sent a detachment of cavalry to the bridge to prevent the Muslims from crossing over towards his army, so the bridge was between two cavalries, that of the Muslims and that of the *mushrikeen*. The ranks were drawn up as follows:

The cavalry in the first rank, followed by the elephants, then the infantry. A huge canopy was set up for Rustam, beneath which he was shaded on his throne, where he sat watching the progress of the battle.¹⁰³ The Muslims were fully prepared to fight. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs had prepared his army early on, appointing commanders and leaders. He appointed men who were known for their virtue to carry the banners, and he organized the vanguard, rearguard and two

¹⁰³ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 255.

flanks, as well as the scouts. He had reached al-Qâdisiyah in a state of readiness. He organized his army in the following manner:

- ❖ In the vanguard: Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah
- ❖ On the right flank: 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'tamm
- ❖ On the left flank: Shurahbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi, with Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah as his deputy
- ❖ In the rearguard: 'Âsim ibn 'Amr
- ❖ In charge of the scouts: Sawâd ibn Mâlik
- ❖ In charge of the cavalry: Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili
- ❖ In charge of the infantry: Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik al-Asadi
- ❖ In charge of the riders: 'Abdullâh ibn Dhi as-Sahamayn al-Ḥanafi
- ❖ To judge between them: 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili
- ❖ The scribe of the army: Ziyâd ibn Abi Sufiyân
- ❖ At the head of the army as their spokesman: Salmân al-Fârisi. All of this was done on 'Umar's instructions.¹⁰⁴

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ addressed the people and recited the following verse:

﴿And indeed We have written in *az-Zaboor* [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books — the *Tawrât* (Torah), the *Injeel* (Gospel), the Psalms and the Qur'an] after [We have already written in] *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfoodh* [the Book that is in the heaven with Allah] that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land.﴾
(*Qur'an* 21: 105)

He ordered the readers to start reciting *Soorah al-Anfâl*, which they did. The people were deeply moved and a sense of tranquillity

¹⁰⁴ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 255.

descended upon them. The people prayed *Dhuhr*, then Sa‘d ordered his army to advance after the fourth *takbeer*, and to say, “*Lā hawla wa la quwwata illa Billāh* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah.”

The battle lasted for four days. Sa‘d was ill with sciatica and abscesses that made him unable to ride or sit, so he lay on his chest on a pillow, looking out over the battlefield from the fort of Qudays which was in al-Qâdisiyah. He had delegated Khâlid ibn ‘Urfuṭah to convey his orders to the people, and he ordered that it be called out to the army: “Envy is not allowed except in jihad for the sake of Allah, O’ people, so envy one another in jihad.”¹⁰⁵

Before the fighting began, there was a dispute about Khâlid ibn ‘Urfuṭah, the deputy of Sa‘d. Sa‘d said: “Carry me and put me where I can see the people.” So they lifted him up, and he lay looking out over them, with the ranks at the bottom of the wall of the fort of Qudays. He gave instructions to Khâlid, and Khâlid gave instruction to the people. He was one of those for whom some of the prominent people had tried to cause trouble, so Sa‘d punished them and rebuked them. He said: “By Allah, were it not that your enemy is there, I would have made an example of you.” He detained them, including Abu Mihjan ath-Thaqafi, and chained them up in the fort. Jareer ibn ‘Abdullāh said, confirming the importance of obeying one’s leader, “As for me, I gave my oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), pledging to hear and obey whomever Allah put in charge, even if he was an Abyssinian slave.” Sa‘d said: “By Allah, if anyone causes similar trouble after this, distracting the Muslims from their enemies when they are in front of them, I will set a precedent in punishing him.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/356.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

After this incident, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs stood up and addressed them. After praising and glorifying Allah, he said: "Allah is the Truth and has no partner or associate in His Dominion, and His promise is never broken. Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿And indeed We have written in *az-Zaboor* [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books — the *Tawrât* (Torah), the *Injeel* (Gospel), the Psalms, the Qur'an] after [We have already written in] *al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh* [the Book that is in the heaven with Allah] that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land.﴾ (*Qur'an* 21: 105) This is your inheritance which your Lord has promised you. Allah put this land under your control three years ago and you have been eating of its food until today, as a result of the efforts of those who fought before you. Now this gathering of them has come to you, but you are the leaders of the Arabs and the best of each tribe, the pride of those who are behind you. If you show disinterest in worldly gains and hope for the Hereafter, Allah will bless you with reward in this world and in the Hereafter. This jîhad is not going to bring anyone closer to his appointed time of death. If you fail and grow weak, you will lose out in this world and will be doomed in the Hereafter."¹⁰⁷

Sa'd wrote to those who were carrying the banners: "I have appointed Khâlîd ibn 'Urfutâh in charge of you. Nothing is preventing me from being in his place but the pain which keeps bothering me and the abscesses I have. I am lying on my front where I can see you, so listen to him and obey him, for he is passing on my instructions and following my commands." This letter was read to the people, and they were content with it and accepted his opinion, encouraging one another to hear and obey. They accepted Sa'd's excuse and agreed with his actions.¹⁰⁸ Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs remained at the top of the fort, looking out over the battlefield. The fort was not

¹⁰⁷ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/357.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 4/358.

fortified, and this is indicative of the courage of Sa'd (ﷺ). It was narrated that 'Uthmān ibn Rajā' as-Sa'di said: "Sa'd ibn Mālīk was the bravest and most daring of people, for he stayed in a fort that was not fortified in order to observe the two armies, looking out over the people. If the Muslims had retreated even a little, the fort would have been exposed and the enemy could have captured it. But by Allah, he never got worried or scared during the terror of those days."¹⁰⁹

Rustam became nervous when he heard the adhān

When Rustam stopped at an-Najaf, he sent a spy to the Muslim camp, who managed to penetrate their ranks at al-Qādisiyah. He saw them using the *miswak* at the time of every prayer, then praying, after which they would separate and go back to their places. He went back to Rustam and told him about them and their behaviour. Rustam asked him: "What do they eat?" He said, "I stayed among them for a night, and by Allah I did not see any one of them eating anything, apart from some sticks that they sucked on in the evening, when they slept and in the early morning." When he moved on, he camped between al-Ḥuṣn and al-'Ateeq.¹¹⁰ When he came close to them, the *mu'adh-dhin* of Sa'd was giving the call for *Fajr* prayer, and he saw them preparing to get up. He called out to the Persians, telling them to ride. He was asked why, and he said, "Do you not see that a call was given to your enemy and they are getting ready for you?" That spy of his said, "No, they are getting ready to pray."¹¹¹

When they crossed the river and stopped, the *mu'adh-dhin* of Sa'd was giving the call for *Dhuhr* prayer. Sa'd prayed, and Rustam said: " 'Umar is killing me."¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/347.

¹¹⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/358.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Raising morale among the Muslim ranks

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ gathered the leaders and commanders of the Muslims at the beginning of the first day of the battle and said to them: "Go and speak to the people as you should at times of war, because you hold a prominent position among the Arabs, and you are the poets and orators of the Arabs, people of wisdom and leaders." So they went around among the people, reminding them and exhorting them to fight.¹¹³

- ❖ Qays ibn Hubayrah al-Asadi said: "O' people, praise Allah for what He has guided you to and for His blessing, and that will increase. Remember the blessings of Allah and beseech Him. For Paradise or booty lie before you. There is nothing but wilderness and barren land beyond this fort, a vast and rugged land that cannot be crossed."
- ❖ Ghâlib ibn 'Abdullâh al-Laythi said: "O' people, praise Allah for His blessing and ask Him for more. Call on Him and He will respond. O' people of Mu'add, what will your response be today when you have with you your horses and swords? Think of what people will say of you tomorrow, for you will be at the forefront tomorrow."
- ❖ Busr ibn Abi Rahm al-Juhani said: "Praise Allah and confirm your words with actions. You have praised Allah for what He has guided you to, and you have affirmed His Oneness and that there is no god beside Him. You have magnified Him and believed in His Prophet and Messengers. Do not die except as Muslims. Nothing should be less significant in your eyes than worldly gain, for worldly gain comes to those who think little of it. Do not incline towards it, for it will run away from you

¹¹³ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/359.

and mislead you. Support (the cause of) Allah and He will support you.”

- ❖ ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Amr said: “O’ Arabs, you are the leaders of the Arabs and you are confronting the leaders of the Persians. What is at stake is nothing less than Paradise. They should not be more eager for this world than you are for Paradise.”
- ❖ Rabee‘ ibn al-Bilād as-Sa‘dī said: “O’ Arabs, fight for your faith and for worldly gain. ¶And march forth in the way [which leads to] forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for *al-Muttaqoon* [the pious, righteous].” (Qur’an 3: 133)”¹¹⁴
- ❖ Rab‘ī ibn ‘Āmir said: “Allah has guided you to Islam and has united you therein and shown you victory. In patience there is comfort, so accustom yourselves to patience and you will get used to it. Do not accustom yourselves to panic and let it become a habit.”

And all of them spoke similar words.¹¹⁵

2.4.1. The day of Armāth

The day of Armāth dawned on the first day of al-Qâdisiyah. Sa‘d gave his instructions to the army, saying: “Stay where you are and do not move until you have prayed *Dhuhr*. When you have prayed *Dhuhr*, I will say *takbeer*, so say *takbeer* and get ready. Remember that *takbeer* was not given to anyone before you, and it was only given to you as a support for you. Then when you hear the second *takbeer*, say *takbeer*, and be ready. When I say the third *takbeer*, say *takbeer* and let your horsemen go forth against the

¹¹⁴ *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/359.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 4/360.

enemy. When I say the fourth *takbeer*, then all march forth until you meet your enemy, and say *Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah.”¹¹⁶

When Sa'd had prayed *Dhuhr*, he ordered the slave whom 'Umar had told to stay with him, who was well versed in Qur'an, to recite the *Soorah* of jihad (i.e., *Soorah al-Anfâl*). He recited the *Soorah* of jihad to the squadron that was closest to him, and it was recited to every other squadron too. It raised the people's morale and they were filled with tranquillity when it was recited to them.¹¹⁷ When the readers had finished, Sa'd said *takbeer*, and those who were around him said *takbeer* in response to his *takbeer*, and the people said *takbeer* in response to one another's *takbeers*, and the people moved forward. Then he said the second *takbeer* and the people got ready. Then he said the third *takbeer* and some horsemen went forward to fight. Men of similar rank from among the Persians came out to meet them and they exchanged blows.¹¹⁸ The Muslim champions, such as Ghâlib ibn 'Abdullâh al-Asadi, 'Âşim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib az-Zubaydi, and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, had a great impact, dealing a heavy blow to the enemy by killing some and capturing some of the enemy's champions, whereas none of the Muslims were killed during the single combat. Single combat is one of the most difficult arts of war, which only a few champions among men do well. It boosts the morale of the victors and increases their courage, and it demoralizes the losers and makes them lose heart. The early Muslims excelled in this art and were always superior to others, hence they were the ones who benefited from it.¹¹⁹ Whilst the people were waiting for the

¹¹⁶ Op. cit., 4/361.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 4/362.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/445.

fourth *takbeer*, the infantry leader of Banu Nahd, Qays ibn Ḥudhaym ibn Jarthoomah, stood up and said: "O' Banu Nahd, rush upon the enemy (*inhadu*). You are called Nahd so act upon your name." Khālīd ibn 'Urfuṭah sent word to him saying, "By Allah, control yourself, or I shall appoint someone else instead of you." Then he calmed down.¹²⁰

Rustam orders some of his troops to attack

When Rustam saw that the Muslims were superior in single combat and in driving off their enemies, he did not wait until the plan of their leader for more single combat was completed. Rather he ordered some of his troops to launch a general attack on the division of the Muslim army that was composed of Banu Bajeelah and those who were with them. This attack was something strange, because the Persians directed nearly half of their army against a section that represented only a small part of the Muslim army. This indicates that they were desperate to put a stop to the single combat in which they had failed. Thus the Persians attacked one flank of the Muslim army with thirteen elephants, each of which was accompanied, according to the Persian military system, by four thousand warriors, including both foot soldiers and horsemen. The elephants scattered among the Muslim squadrons, but the attack focused on Bajeelah and those who were with them. The foot soldiers, who were known for their courage, stood firm against the Persian attack.

Sa'd commands Asad to go to the aid of Bajeelah

Sa'd saw what was happening to Bajeelah, so he sent word to Banu Asad, telling them: "Go to the aid of Bajeelah and the people who are with them." Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, Ḥammāl ibn Mālīk, Ghālīb ibn 'Abdullāh and ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr set out, with their

¹²⁰ *Tāreekh al-Ṭabari*, 4/363.

squadrons. Al-Ma'roor ibn Suwayd and Shaqeeq said: "By Allah, they charged at them, and kept stabbing and striking until we managed to get the elephants away from them. Then a powerful man of theirs came out and engaged Tulayḥah in single combat, but Tulayḥah soon killed him. When the Persians saw what the squadron of Asad was doing to their elephants, they launched a heavy attack against the Muslims. Dhu al-Ḥājib and al-Jalinus, two of the Persian leaders, launched a coordinated attack on the Muslims, whilst the Muslims were still waiting for the fourth *takbeer* from Sa'd. The Persian forces gathered around Asad, along with those elephants, but Asad stood firm. Sa'd said the fourth *takbeer*, then the Muslims moved forward towards them, whilst the attack on Asad continued and the elephants moved against the Muslims' horses from the right and the left. The horses were terrified by the elephants, so the horsemen asked the foot soldiers to push their horses forward towards the elephants.

Sa'd tells Banu Tameem to tackle the elephants

Sa'd sent word to 'Āṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, saying: "O' Tameem, are you not keepers of camels and horses? Do you not have a way to deal with these elephants?" They said, "Yes, by Allah." Then he called some of his people who were archers, and others who were skilful and agile, and said to them, "O' archers, target the riders of the elephants with your arrows." And he said, "O' skilful and agile ones, go around the back of the elephants and cut the ropes so that the boxes which carry the fighters will fall. The fighting was focused on Asad, but there was fighting in the right and left flanks too. The companions of 'Āṣim went to the elephants and took hold of their tails and the ropes; they cut the ropes and the elephants started trumpeting. There was no elephant left that day but the boxes were thrown off and the fighters that were in them were killed. Fighting broke out everywhere, thus relieving the pressure on Asad and

pushing the Persians back from them. The fighting continued until sunset and into the early part of the night, then both sides fell back.

That day there were five hundred casualties among Asad, who had been in the front of the army. 'Āṣim and Banu Tameem had been shielding the people. That was the first day, which was known as the day of Armāth.¹²¹

The heroic attitude of Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid

The command of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ had an effect on Banu Asad. On that day, Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid said: "O' my tribe, our leader has great faith in you. If he knew that there was anyone who was more able to go to the aid of these people he would have sent them. Charge at the enemy, go at them like fierce lions. You are called Asad ("lion") so be as fierce as lions and never flee or turn back. Go forward and do not retreat. What a good job Rabee'ah is doing. Charge at them in the name of Allah."¹²²

These words had an amazing effect on his people, motivating and energizing them. They were on their own in the battlefield until Banu Tameem came to their aid, and they sent forth that day five hundred martyrs.¹²³

The tribes were impressed by the heroic courage of Banu Asad, and al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi said: "O; Kindah, what a good job Banu Asad are doing." So Kindah moved from the defensive to the offensive, and drove back the Persians who were in front of them.¹²⁴

¹²¹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/365.

¹²² *Ibid*, 4/364.

¹²³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/449.

¹²⁴ *Al-Qādisiyyah* by Aḥmad 'Ādil Kamāl, p. 139; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/364.

The field hospital

The field hospital was located in al-'Udhayb, where the womenfolk of the *Mujāhideen* were staying, waiting patiently and seeking reward with Allah. They received the wounded and treated them until the decree of Allah concerning them was fulfilled. In addition to that, they had another mission in which the children helped them, namely digging the graves of the martyrs. Treating and nursing the wounded is in tune with women's aptitudes, whereas digging graves is a tough job, but the men were busy fighting in jihad, so the women had to do their job out of necessity. They were qualified to do so because of their faith and patience.¹²⁵ The martyrs were moved to the valley of Musharraf, which is between al-'Udhayb and 'Ayn ash-Shams.¹²⁶ The cessation of fighting between the Muslims and their enemies that night gave some of the *Mujāhideen* the opportunity to visit their families in al-'Udhayb.¹²⁷

Al-Khansa' bint 'Amr urged her sons to fight on the night before the battle

In the Muslim women's camp in al-'Udhayb, al-Khansa' bint 'Amr — the poetess of Banu Sulaym whose career straddled the *Jāhiliyah* and Islam — sat with her four grown sons, urging them to fight. She said: "You became Muslim willingly and migrated by choice. You know what Allah has promised of great reward to the Muslims who fight the *kāfirs*, and you know that the realm which abides is better than the realm which will pass away. Allah says,

«O' you who believe! Endure and be more patient [than your enemy], and guard your territory [by stationing army units permanently at the

¹²⁵ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/451.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 10/452.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*.

places from where the enemy can attack you], and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.﴾ (Qur'an 3: 200)

If you wake up safe and sound tomorrow, *insha' Allāh*, then go and fight your enemy, seeking Allah's support against His enemies. When you see the fighting grow intense, then go forth. If you do that, you will gain booty and honour in the Hereafter."¹²⁸

A woman of an-Nakh' encouraged her sons to fight

A woman from an-Nakh' had four sons who participated in the battle that day. When dawn started to break, she said to them: "You became Muslim and did not change, and you migrated but you did not migrate to Yathrib (Madenah)... Then you brought your elderly mother and put her in front of the Persians. By Allah, you are the sons of one man, just as you are the sons of one woman. I did not betray your father and I did not cause any shame to your maternal uncles. Go and participate in the battle from start to finish." So they left her, hastening to join the battle. When they had left her, she raised her hands towards heaven and said: "O' Allah, protect my sons." After that they came back to her, having fought well, and not one of them was wounded."¹²⁹

These are the attitudes of some of the elderly women on the first day of al-Qâdisiyah.

2.4.2. The day of Aghwâth

The day of Aghwâth was the second day of al-Qâdisiyah. On this day a division of the Syrian army, led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, arrived. The caliph 'Umar (ؓ) had ordered the governor of Syria, Abu 'Ubaydah, to send the army of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed

¹²⁸ *Al-Isti'âb*, no. 287; *Nisâ' al-Qâdisiyah*, Pp. 146, 147.

¹²⁹ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/366.

back to Iraq to support the Muslims in al-Qâdisiyah. So he sent them, but he kept Khâlîd with him because he needed him. He appointed Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâs, the nephew of Sa'd, in charge of this army. When they had come from Iraq to Syria under the leadership of Khâlîd ibn al-Waleed, they had been nine thousand strong. Now six thousand of them were returning to Iraq. Hâshim ibn 'Utbah appointed al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr over the vanguard, which was composed of one thousand warriors.¹³⁰

The heroic exploits of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr

Al-Qa'qâ' hastened, along with the vanguard, until they reached the army in al-Qâdisiyah on the day of Aghwâth. During his march, he had come up with an idea to boost the morale of the Muslims. He divided his army into one hundred sections, each of which was formed of ten men, and told them to come, one group after another; every time one group disappeared from view, they sent another ten after them. He went forth with the first ten, then they came in groups one after another. Every time al-Qa'qâ' looked towards the horizon and saw another group coming, he would say *takbeer* and the Muslims would join in and were encouraged to continue fighting their enemy. This strategy succeeded in raising the moral of the fighters, for the arrival of one thousand men is not regarded a large reinforcement for an army of thirty thousand, but this idea to which Allah guided al-Qa'qâ' made up for the small number of reinforcements and strengthened the resolve of the Muslims.

He gave them the good news of the arrival of more troops, and said: "O' people... do what I do." He went forward and called out: "Who will fight with me in single combat?" They said concerning him what Abu Bakr had said: "No army will be defeated among

¹³⁰ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/367; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/367.

whom there is a man like this,” and they felt happy with him. Dhu al-Ḥajib¹³¹ came out to meet him and al-Qaʿqâʿ asked him: “Who are you?”¹³² He said, “I am Bahman Jâdhawayh.” At this point al-Qaʿqâʿ remembered the calamity that had befallen the Muslims on the day of the bridge at the hands of this commander. He was seized with Islamic zeal and called out, “Vengeance for Abu ʿUbayd, Sulayṭ and the companions of the bridge!” Even though this Persian commander was renowned for his bravery, his courage must have failed him when he heard this cry. Abu Bakr had said of al-Qaʿqâʿ: “The voice of al-Qaʿqâʿ in an army is better than a thousand men.”¹³³ How could a man withstand it, no matter how brave and steadfast he was?” Hence al-Qaʿqâʿ soon slew him in front of his troops. His killing in this manner had a great effect of unnerving the Persians and raising the moral of the Muslims, because he was the commander of twenty thousand Persians. Then al-Qaʿqâʿ called out again, “Who will fight with me in single combat?” Two men came out to meet him, one of whom was al-Bayrazân and the other was al-Bandawân. Al-Qaʿqâʿ was joined by al-Ḥârith ibn Zabyân ibn al-Ḥârith, the brother of Banu Tameem al-Lât. Al-Qaʿqâʿ fought with al-Bayrazân and killed him.¹³⁴ Ibn Zabyân fought with al-Bandawân, who was one of the champions of the Persians and killed him. Thus at the beginning of the day, al-Qaʿqâʿ finished off two of the five Persian commanders. Undoubtedly that threw the Persians into confusion, which further contributed to the demoralization of the Persian troops. Two horsemen from each side met in combat, and al-Qaʿqâʿ started saying: “O’ Muslims, use your swords and reap the harvest.” The

¹³¹ One of the Persian leaders and heroes; he is the one who defeated the Muslims on the day of the bridge. [Author]

¹³² Al-Qaʿqâʿ asked Jâdhawayh this question because he did not recognize him; on the day of the bridge, al-Qaʿqâʿ had been in Syria. [Author]

¹³³ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/455.

¹³⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/368.

people started passing on this advice to one another, and rushed at the enemy, and continued fighting until evening came. The narrators state that al-Qa'qâ' launched thirty charges; every time he saw another group coming, he launched another charge. And the last one who was killed was Burz Jamhar al-Hamadhâni.

'Alba' ibn Jahsh al-'Ujali: Disembowelled during the battle

A man from among the Persians appeared before the troops of Bakr ibn Wâ'il and called out, "Who will fight with me in single combat?" 'Alba' ibn Jahsh al-'Ujali went out to meet him. 'Alba' struck the Persian a blow in his chest that damaged his lungs, then the Persian struck him a blow in his belly and his intestines spilled out and fell to the ground. The Persian died at once; as for 'Alba', he was unable to stand. He tried to put his intestines back in place, but he could not. A Muslim man passed by him, and 'Alba' said to him, "Hey you, help me with my belly." So he helped him put his intestines back in, then 'Alba' held the two sides of the wound together and marched towards the Persian ranks, without looking back at the Muslims. Death caught up with him thirty cubits from where he first fell, and he died saying,

"I was one of those who did well in battle, and
I hope that this will bring me a reward from our Lord."

Al-A'raf ibn al-A'lam al-'Uqayli

A man from among the Persians came out saying, "Who will fight with me in single combat?" Al-A'raf ibn al-A'lam al-'Uqayli came out to meet him and killed him. Then another came out to fight him and he killed him. Then the horsemen surrounded him and threw him down. He dropped his weapon and they took it, so he threw dust in their faces until he got back to his companions.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/370.

The sacrifices made by the four sons of al-Khansa'

The four sons of al-Khansa' made the ultimate sacrifice on that day. They went out to fight with zeal, and each of them recited verse to encourage himself and brothers. They went out in turn and fought until they were martyred.¹³⁶ When the news of her four sons reached al-Khansa', she said: "Praise be to Allah Who has honoured me by their deaths; I hope that my Lord will re-unite me with them by His mercy."¹³⁷

A trick by al-Qa'qâ' that had a far-reaching effect on the Persians

On this day, the day of Aghwâth, al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and his cousins from Tameem played a trick that had a far-reaching effect on the Persians. When he saw what the elephants had done to the Muslims' horses on the first day, he and his people, by the help of Allah, prepared the camels and made them look frightening, so as to support the horses. They clothed them, adorned them and put masks on their faces, then they mounted the foot soldiers on them and surrounded them with the horses to protect them. Then they attacked the Persian horses with them, and did to them on the day of Aghwâth what they had done to the Muslims on the day of Armâth. There was no group, large or small, at whom they charged, but that group's horses got spooked and overwhelmed by the Muslims' horses. When the people saw that, they began to copy them, and the Persians suffered more because of the camels on the day of Aghwâth than the Muslims had suffered because of the elephants on the day of Armâth.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ *Al-Qâdisiyyah*, p. 154, by Aḥmad 'Âdil Shâkir.

¹³⁷ *Al-Khansa' Umm ash-Shuhada'*, by 'Abdul-Mun'im al-Hâshimi, p. 98.

¹³⁸ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/46.

Thus we see that the first Muslims excelled over their enemies in military creativity. The Persians had exhausted the Muslims on the first day by using the elephants, and since the Muslims had no elephants, they invented a trick using the camels that they did have, to fool their enemies. This brilliant trick scared the enemy's horses and caused them to panic and flee, along with their Persian riders. This is how the Muslims should be — they should excel in the field of material preparation after excelling in the field of spiritual preparation.

Abu Mihjan ath-Thaqafi in the heart of the battle

On the day of Aghwâth, the battle went on until midnight. That night was called *Laylat as-Sawâd*. Then the fighting stopped after both sides retreated. The cessation of fighting was of great benefit for the Muslims, as they were able to move their martyrs to their place of burial in the valley of Musharriq, and they moved their wounded to al-'Udhayb, where the women could take care of them. Abu Mihjan ath-Thaqafi took part in the fighting for the first time on this night.¹³⁹ Abu Mihjan had been detained and put in chains, and he was in the palace. In the evening he went up to Sa'd and asked him to forgive him and let him go. Sa'd rebuked him, so he went back down and went to Salma bint Khaṣafah, and said: "O' Salma, O' daughter of Âl Khaṣafah, do you want to do something good?" She said, "What is it?" He said, "Let me go and lend me al-Balqa' (a horse). By Allah, if Allah keeps me safe and sound I will come back to you and put my feet in these chains." She said, "Why would I do that?" So he went back with his feet still in the chains, expressing in verse his sorrow at not being able to join the army and fight alongside the Muslims, and promising Allah that he would never visit taverns again if he got the chance to join the army.

¹³⁹ Op. cit., 10/462.

Salma said: "I prayed *istikhârah* and I trust you." She let him go and said, "But as for the horse, I will not lend it to you." She went back to her house, but he still took the horse; he led it out of the gate of the castle that was closest to the ditch, then he mounted it and galloped off until he approached the right flank of the army. Then he said *takbeer* and charged at the left flank of the enemy, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. Then he went to the back of the Muslim army and moved to the left flank, where he said *takbeer* and charged at the right flank of the enemy, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. Then he went back behind the Muslim army and charged at the heart of the enemy army, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. That night he fought the enemy in an amazing manner, and the people were impressed with him, but they did not know who he was, for they had not seen him at the beginning of the battle. Some of them said, he must be one of the companions of Hâshim, or Hâshim himself. As he was watching the people, lying on his stomach at the top of the fort, Sa'd said: "By Allah, were it not that Abu Mihjan is detained, I would have said that this is Abu Mihjan and this (horse) is al-Balqa'." Rumours flew as to who that man was. At midnight the Persians retreated and the Muslims did likewise. Abu Mihjan went back to where he had come out from, and put his feet back in their chains. Salma said to him: "O' Abu Mihjan, why did this man detain you?" He said, "By Allah, he did not detain me for something that I ate or drank, but I was a drinker at the time of *Jâhiliyah*, and I am a poet, I say whatever comes to my lips and sometimes that gets me into trouble. That is why he detained me. I said in one of my poems:

'If I die, bury me next to a grapevine so that its roots may irrigate my veins.

Do not bury me in the wilderness for I fear that I would never taste it again.'"

The next day, Salma told Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs about what had happened. He called him and let him go, saying, "Go, and I will not hold anything against you for what you say unless you do it." He said, "Rest assured that I will never do what my tongue says, if it says something objectionable."¹⁴⁰

Al-Qa'qâ's plan in the latter part of the night of as-Sawâd

One of the most important incidents that took place in the latter half of the night of as-Sawâd was when al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr took the opportunity to make a plan to raise the morale of the Muslim troops on the following day. He ordered his followers to sneak out and then come back during the day, one group after another, each group composed of one hundred warriors. He said to them, "When the sun rises, come one hundred at a time; every time one group disappears from sight, send another hundred. If Hâshim comes, all well and good, otherwise this is a way to renew our people's hope and energy."

When the sun started to rise, al-Qa'qâ' was keeping a lookout. He saw horses in the distance, so he said *takbeer* and the people repeated his *takbeer* and said, the reinforcements have come. His brother 'Âsim ibn 'Amr followed his example, and told his people to do the same thing. They came from another direction (Khaffân). No sooner had the last of al-Qa'qâ's companions come, but Hâshim ibn 'Utbah also arrived with seven hundred men from the army of Syria.

When the last of the companions of al-Qa'qâ' came, Hâshim appeared with seventy men.¹⁴¹ Here the reader may note the humbleness of Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâs, who agreed to follow the best strategy: he split his army up into groups just as al-

¹⁴⁰ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/374.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, 4/375.

Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr had done. His ego and his position did not prevent him from following the opinion of one of the commanders who were under him. He was one of the men who had been shaped by the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ), those who had begun to cancel their egos and self-interests for the sake of the interests of Islam and the Muslims. This is one of the main reasons for their success in establishing the Islamic state and defeating the world powers of that era.¹⁴²

2.4.3. The day of 'Imâs

This was the third day, the day of 'Imâs. The Persians came up with a new plan to avoid the problems that they had faced on the first day, when the belts of their elephants had been cut. They put foot soldiers with each elephant to protect it, and horsemen to protect the foot soldiers. The Muslims continued to fight the elephants and the men on top of them and around them, and they found the going tough indeed. When Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (رضي الله عنه) saw what a hard time the Muslims were having, he sent word to some Persian Muslims who were with the Muslim army, asking them about the elephants and where their weak points were. They said that the weak points were the eyes and the trunk; the elephants could not function if these were struck. So Sa'd sent word to al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr, telling them: "Take care of the white elephant for me." Al-Qa'qâ' was familiar with it and was close to it. He also sent word to Hammâl ibn Mâlik and Ribayyil ibn 'Amr al-Asadi, saying: "Take care of the mangy elephant for me." They were familiar with it and were close to it. Al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim took their little spears and marched towards the elephant with a squadron of horsemen and foot soldiers, and they said to those who were with them, "Surround it and make it get

¹⁴² *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/466.

confused." The elephant started looking in confusion right and left at those who were around it. Al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim got near it and attacked it whilst it was distracted by the people around it. They both drove their little spears into the eyes of the white elephant, which shook its head and threw its driver off. Then it lowered its trunk, and al-Qa'qâ' struck it with his sword and cut it off. The elephant fell on its side, killing those who were on top of it. Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik launched his attack and said to ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr: "You choose: either you strike its trunk while I stab its eye, or you stab its eye while I strike its trunk." He chose to strike its trunk, so Ḥammâl charged at it whilst it was distracted by those who were around it. Ḥammâl stabbed it in the eye, and the elephant fell on its back. Then it got up and ar-Ribayyil struck it and chopped off its trunk. The elephant driver saw him and struck him on the forehead and nose with an iron stick, but both ar-Ribayyil and Ḥammâl managed to get away. The elephants squealed like pigs at the loss of the two leading elephants and started running away, stampeding the Persian army, until they crossed the river of al-'Ateeq and fled towards al-Madâ'in, and everyone who had been riding them was killed.¹⁴³

Once the battlefield was free of elephants, the people marched against one another and the fighting intensified. The Persians had a reserve army of elite fighters, and every time a gap appeared in their ranks, Yazdagird would send for some of them. That day ended with the Muslims and the enemy on an equal footing.¹⁴⁴

The heroism of 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib

'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib said: "I am going to attack the elephant and the people around it. Do not leave me for longer than the time it takes to slaughter a camel. If you come late, you will have lost Abu

¹⁴³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/468.

¹⁴⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/376.

Thawr (meaning himself), and how could you find another man like Abu Thawr? If you come on time you will find me with my sword still in my hand.” So he charged and did not look back until he started striking them and disappeared in a cloud of dust. His companions said, “What are you waiting for? You are going to lose him, and if you lose him, the Muslims will have lost their knight.” So they charged and the *mushrikeen* separated around him after throwing him to the floor and stabbing him, but his sword was still in his hand and he was striking them. His horse had also been stabbed. When he saw his companions and realized that the Persians had backed away from him, he grabbed the leg of a Persian horse whose rider was trying to make it move; the horse stumbled and the Persian looked at ‘Amr and wanted to kill him. The Muslims saw him and rushed to help him. The Persian dismounted and ran back to his companions and ‘Amr said: “Give me the reins.” They gave him the reins and he mounted the horse and rode off.¹⁴⁵

Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi

The fighting continued on the third day until night came, then the voice of Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, who had gone behind the Persian lines, made them stop fighting and break apart. That scared the Persians and amazed the Muslims, and they stopped fighting to see what was happening. Sa‘d (ؓ) had sent him with some other people to guard a place where the Muslims might be exposed to danger, and he went beyond the call of duty and came from behind the Persians, and shouted “*Allāhu Akbar* — Allah is All-Great” three times.¹⁴⁶ This tactic proved useful, as the fighting stopped and there was an opportunity to regroup and prepare for the night fighting.

¹⁴⁵ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/378.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 4/382.

Qays ibn al-Makshooḥ

When he returned from Syria along with Hâshim ibn 'Utbah, he addressed the people saying: "O' Arabs, Allah has blessed you with Islam and has honoured you with Muhammad (ﷺ), and you have become brothers by Allah's grace. Your call is one and you are united, after you had been enemies of one another, fighting one another like lions and snatching one another like wolves. Support (the cause of) Allah and He will support you, and Allah will grant you victory over the Persians. Allah granted victory to your brothers in Syria and they seized the red palaces and the red fortresses."¹⁴⁷

The night of al-Hareer

The fighting started on the night of *al-Hareer*, ahead of the fourth day. The Persians changed their tactics on this night. Rustam realized that his army had not achieved the same level of horsemanship in battle as the Muslims had, and they did not even come close. So he decided to make the whole army charge at once, so as to avoid the kind of setbacks he had previously encountered, which had destroyed the morale of his troops. None of the Persians came out for single combat after the brilliant performance of the Muslim champions. Rustam arranged his army in thirteen rows in the core and on both flanks. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr began to fight, accompanied by the elite forces, before Sa'd said *takbeer*, but he let them off and prayed for forgiveness for them. When he said *takbeer* three times, the commanders and all the army marched forward, in three ranks, the archers, the horsemen and the foot soldiers. The fighting that night was very intense, and they continued fighting from the first part of the night until morning, not speaking at all and communicating only in grunts (*al-hareer*), so that night was called the night of *al-Hareer*. The Muslims encouraged one another to strive

¹⁴⁷ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/378.

their utmost in fighting, because they were expecting a tough fight. Among their words that have been narrated concerning that are the following¹⁴⁸:

Durayd ibn Ka'b an-Nakha'i said to his people: "The Muslims are preparing for the fight, so be among the first of the Muslims to fight for Allah and in jihad tonight, for no one will be among the first tonight but his reward will be in accordance with how soon he joined the fight. Compete with them for martyrdom and be content with death, for this is the best way to avoid death if you want to live and if you do not, then the Hereafter is what you are seeking."

Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays said: "O' Arabs, these people (the Persians) should not be more daring in facing death and less concerned about worldly gains than you. Compete for wives and children and do not fear death, for this is the wish of the noble people and the means of martyrdom."¹⁴⁹

Ḥumaydah ibn an-Nu'mān al-Bāriqi said: "On the night of *al-Hareer* there was a fully-armed Persian squadron near the tribe of Ju'fā, so they marched upon them and fought them with the sword, but they saw that their swords were having no effect on the armour they were wearing, so they retreated. Ḥumaydah ibn an-Nu'mān al-Bāriqi said to them, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'Our weapons are not effective against them.' He said, 'Wait here until I show you.' So they watched, and Ḥumaydah attacked one of their men from behind, striking him with a spear. Then he turned to his companions and said, 'I think this is the way to kill them.' So they attacked them and pushed them back."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/472.

¹⁴⁹ *Tāreekh at-Tabari*, 4/384.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 4/386.

Near the tribe of Kindah there was Turk at-Ṭabari, one of the Persian commanders. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi said: "O' people, march towards them." So he marched towards them with seven hundred men and pushed them back, and he killed their commander, Turk.

The fighting that night was intense and non-stop. The leaders of the tribes encouraged their tribes to be steadfast and patient. One indication of the intensity of the fighting on that night was the report narrated by at-Ṭabari from Anas ibn al-Ḥulays, who said: "I was present on the night of *al-Hareer*, where the clash of iron was like the sound of the blacksmith all night, until morning came. They were given a great deal of patience. Sa'd spent a night such as he had never spent, and the Arabs and Persians saw something the like of which they had never seen. There was no more news from either Rustam or Sa'd, and Sa'd started to make *du'ā'* until the night was half over.

Sa'd understood that as meaning that victory was nigh, so Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs spent the night praying to Allah and seeking His support. It is worth noting here that Sa'd was a man whose *du'ā'* was answered.¹⁵¹

2.4.4. The day of al-Qâdisiyah

On the fourth day the Muslims were still fighting. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr went about among the people and said, "Victory will come soon to those who show patience, so be patient for a while and attack, for victory comes with patience, so prefer patience over panic." A number of leaders gathered around him and they charged at Rustam, until at dawn they reached the troops who were near him. When the tribes saw that, their leaders stood up to address them. Qays ibn

¹⁵¹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 9/474.

‘Abdi Yaghooth, al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays, ‘Amr ibn Ma‘di Yakrib, Ibn Dhi as-Sahmayn al-Khash‘ami and Ibn Dhi al-Burdayn al-Hilāli stood up and said: “These people (the Persians) should not have more courage in facing death than you, or be more willing to forfeit this world than you.” Some men of Rabee‘ah stood up and said, “You are the most knowledgeable of people about the Persians and you were more courageous against them in the past. What is stopping you now from being more courageous than you were before?”¹⁵²

Thus we see another aspect of the brilliance of al-Qa‘qā‘ ibn ‘Amr, whose brilliance was manifested in many ways. Allah blessed him with a combination of rare courage, wisdom and strong faith, and he used all of that to support Islam and the Muslims. His joining the battle was a great support to the Muslims. Al-Qa‘qā‘ realized that the enemy was running out of patience after the fighting had gone on for a day and a night non-stop, and before that for two days with only a short respite. By means of his insight and lengthy experience — after the guidance of Allah — he knew that the consequences of the battle would be in favour of those who showed patience after this lengthy and exhaustive struggle. Al-Qa‘qā‘ and the heroes who were with him managed to penetrate deeply into the core of the Persian army until they found themselves close to Rustam at noon. At this point the support of Allah came down and He supported His close friends (*awliya*‘) with troops from Him; a violent wind, the *daboor* or west wind, blew and carried the cover away from the throne of Rustam, throwing it into the al-‘Ateeq river. Then dust blew up in the faces of the Persians and hindered their defence.¹⁵³

¹⁵² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/387.

¹⁵³ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/476.

The slaying of the Persian commander Rustam

Al-Qa'qâ' and those who were with him advanced until they found the throne of Rustam, which they did not see before because of the dust. Rustam had left the throne and sheltered behind a mule, which fell on top of him without him realizing it and damaged a disk in his back. Rustam fled towards the al-'Ateeq river to try and save himself, but Hilâl caught up with him. He grabbed his leg, then he dragged him and killed him, then he climbed on top of the throne and shouted, "I have killed Rustam, by the Lord of the Ka'bah! Come to me!" The core of the Persian army fled. The other Muslim commanders also advanced towards those who were opposite them, and the Persians retreated before them. When al-Jalinus realized that Rustam had been killed, he stood on the dam that had been made in the river and called the Persians to cross, fleeing from death, and they crossed. As for the Persian troops who were in chains, of whom there were thirty thousand, they rushed into the al-'Ateeq river and the Muslims stabbed them with their spears, and not one of them escaped.¹⁵⁴

The end of the battle

The battle ended by the grace of Allah, then by the efforts of the Muslim heroes and the wisdom of their commander, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs. It was a fierce and tough battle in which the enemies resisted the Muslims for three days, until Allah defeated them on the fourth day, whereas the Muslims usually defeated their enemies in one day. One of the reasons for this resistance was the fact that the Persians regarded this battle as decisive: if they won, their state would abide, but if they lost their state would perish and would never recover after that. Another reason for their resistance was the presence of their greatest leader, Rustam, at the head of the army, who was a

¹⁵⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/388.

commander with a history of victories against his enemies, in addition to the Persians' superiority in numbers and equipment. The Persians numbered some one hundred and twenty thousand warriors, not counting their followers, as well as the reinforcements sent daily by Yazdagird, whereas the number of Muslims was thirty-odd thousand.¹⁵⁵ Despite all that, the Muslims defeated them after they sent on 8500 martyrs.¹⁵⁶ This number of martyrs is the largest number of any battle during the first Muslim conquests. The fact that the number was so high is indicative of the fierceness of the battle and of the Muslims' willingness to expose themselves to martyrdom. May Allah be pleased with them all.¹⁵⁷

Pursuing the remnants of the defeated army

Sa'd (ﷺ) issued orders that the remnants of the defeated army be pursued. He sent al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and Shuraḥbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi off right and left in pursuit of those who had not crossed the river, and he ordered Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah to pursue those who had crossed the river with their commanders. The Persians had made a hole in the dam so that the Muslims would not be able to follow them, but Zuhrah and three hundred horsemen managed to cross with their horses. He ordered those who did not manage to cross to come via the bridge, even though it was a little further, and catch up with them. Al-Jalinus, who was one of their top commanders, was travelling at the rear of the army in order to protect them. Zuhrah caught up with him and they fought; they exchanged two blows and Zuhrah killed him and took his possessions. They pursued the Persians and killed some of them, then in the evening they went back to al-Qâdisiyah with the Muslims.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/388.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/479.

¹⁵⁸ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/389.

Good news of the victory reaches 'Umar (ﷺ)

Sa'd wrote to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) telling him of the victory, sending the letter with Sa'd ibn 'Umaylah al-Fazâri. He said in his letter: "Allah has granted us victory over the Persians, and has given them the same punishment as those who came before them, after a lengthy fight and much distress. They fought the Muslims with numbers the like of which has never been seen before, but Allah did not benefit them thereby, rather He benefited the Muslims instead. The Muslims followed them along the rivers and riverbanks, and in the mountain passes. Among the Muslims, Sa'd ibn 'Ubayd al-Qâri' and So and so and So and so were killed, and other Muslim men whom we do not know, but Allah knows who they are. They used to recite the Qur'an with a sound like the buzzing of bees when night came, and they were the lions of mankind, although lions cannot compare to them. Those who passed away are not better than those who were left, except by virtue of martyrdom, because martyrdom was not decreed for them."¹⁵⁹

We learn several things from this letter, such as the following:

Sa'd's attitude of *Tawheed*, and how he glorified Allah and declared that he himself had no power or strength; the victory over their enemies came from Allah alone, and did not come by the strength of the Muslims, despite the great efforts and sacrifices that they made and despite the huge strength and numbers of the enemy. The outcome of the battle was not up to the people, rather it was all under Allah's control. He is the One Who deprived the enemy of benefiting from their strength, and He is the One Who allowed the Muslims to benefit from their strength. Human beings are simply the means by which Allah grants benefit or harm. Allah is the Only One Who can ward off harm or bring benefits. Thus Sa'd (ﷺ)

¹⁵⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/408.

understood the meaning of *Tawḥeed*, and he lived it with his troops day by day. In his letter, we see Sa'd describing the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) and the *Tābi'een* who were with them, as excelling in worship and courage, for they were worshippers by night, reciting the Qur'an with a sound like bees humming, never becoming tired or exhausted, and by day they were knights whose courage and steadfastness could not be matched even by lions.¹⁶⁰

'Umar (ﷺ) would stand outside Madeenah to see if anyone was coming from al-Qādisiyah. He would wait from morning until mid-day, then he would go back to his family and his home. When the bringer of glad tidings came, he said, "Where have you come from?" He told him, and he said, "O' slave of Allah, tell me!" He said, "Allah has defeated the enemy." 'Umar ran beside him, asking him questions, and the man on the camel did not know who he was, until they entered Madeenah and the people started greeting him as *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. He said, "Why didn't you tell me that you were the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, may Allah have mercy on you?" 'Umar said, "Don't worry about it, O' my brother."¹⁶¹

From this report we learn a number of things, including the following:

- ❖ The great interest of 'Umar, which led him to go out into the desert every day in hope of finding riders coming from Iraq, so that he could ask them about news of the Muslims and their enemies. He could have delegated someone else to bring the news to him, but his deep interest and concern for the Muslims would not let him do that. This is the ultimate mercy and sense of responsibility.

¹⁶⁰ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/481.

¹⁶¹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/408.

- ❖ 'Umar's deep humility. He kept running alongside the rider, asking him for news of the battle. That messenger did not want to tell him the details until he reached the caliph, and he did not realize that the caliph was the man who was speaking to him and running beside him, until he learned that from the people in Madeenah. This is a great character and attitude for which the Muslims are entitled to feel proud before the entire world, for it is indicative of the greatness of this religion which produced men like 'Umar who were so just, merciful, resolved and humble.¹⁶²

2.5. Lessons and benefits

2.5.1. The date of the battle and its effect on the progress of the conquests

Historians differ concerning the date of this battle. Professor Aḥmad 'Ādil Kamāl has researched the matter well, and reached the conclusion that it took place in Sha'bān of 15 A.H.¹⁶³ I am inclined to favour this view.

There can be no doubt that al-Qâdisiyah comes at the top of the list of decisive battles in the history of the world, and that it shows how divine support comes to those who are true believers. As a result of this battle, the gates of Iraq, and thence all of Persia, were opened. After that, Muslim victories came one after another. It brought the end of the Sassanids in a political and military sense, and the end of Magianism in a religious sense. From here the religion of Islam spread throughout Persia and beyond. In al-Qâdisiyah the Muslims

¹⁶² *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/488.

¹⁶³ *Al-Qâdisiyah*, 266; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/488.

dealt a blow to the Persians from which they never recovered. Hence al-Qâdisiyah deserves to be at the top of the list of decisive battles in human history.¹⁶⁴

2.5.2. 'Umar's speech after the victory of al-Qâdisiyah

When news of the victory reached 'Umar (ؓ), he announced it to them, and said: "I am very keen not to leave any need without meeting it, so long as we are flexible with one another. If that is not possible then we should support one another until we are all equal and have enough to survive. I wish you knew what I have in my heart for you, but there is no way for you to know except by my actions. By Allah, I am not a king to enslave you; rather I am a slave of Allah who has been given a trust. If I keep away from the public wealth and I spend it on you and make sure that you all have enough food and water in your houses, then I would be blessed. If I kept it for myself, I would have a short-lived joy, but I would be doomed for a long time."¹⁶⁵

2.5.3. Fulfilment of agreements among the Muslims, and justice with no compromise

Sa'd wrote another letter to 'Umar (ؓ), asking him for instructions regarding the *ahl adh-dhimmah* of the Arabs of Iraq who had broken their treaty when the Muslims were weak. 'Umar stood up and addressed the people, saying: "Whoever acts on whims and desires and sin loses out and harms no one but himself; whoever follows the Sunnah and adheres to laws and follows the right path, seeking that which is with Allah for those who obey Him, is doing

¹⁶⁴ *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, Pp. 473, 474.

¹⁶⁵ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/409.

the right thing and is a winner. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and your Lord treats no one with injustice.﴾ (Qur'an 18: 49)

The Muslims have defeated their enemies and the original inhabitants have moved on, and there are some people (who did not move on and) who have come to the Muslims on the basis of their previous covenant. What do you think of those who claim that they were forced to join the enemy; and those who did not make such a claim and did not stay, but rather moved on; and those who stayed and did not make any claim or move on; and those who surrendered?"

They agreed to honour the commitment to those who stayed and did not cause any harm, and that those who made a claim and were believed and those who fulfilled the covenant should be treated appropriately, but if they were not believed, they should be told that there is no covenant and a new covenant should be drawn up. As for those who had left their land and joined the Persians, if they wished they could make a new covenant with the Muslims, and they would come under Muslim protection, or the Muslims could continue to keep them from their land and not give them any option but fighting. Those who stayed and surrendered could be given the choice between paying *jizyah* or leaving; and the same choice was offered to the peasants.¹⁶⁶

We learn a number of lessons from this, including the following:

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) applied the principle of *shoora*, whereby he used to consult the people of wisdom in all his important affairs, despite the fact that he was known for abundant knowledge and deep wisdom. This noble conduct was one of the reasons for his great success in ruling the ummah. In these words with which 'Umar

¹⁶⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/410.

prefaced his consultation, he reminded the *Ṣaḥābah* of the necessity of avoiding whims and desires and the importance of being sincere in one's intention towards Allah, and of adhering to the straight path as set out by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Whoever does that will be protected from making errors of judgement in ruling, will see things correctly and will win the reward of Allah.¹⁶⁷ 'Umar summed up this advice in a letter which he sent to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, in which he said: "In all things Allah has allowed concessions in certain situations, except in two things: justice and *dhikr*. As for *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), there is no concession under any circumstances and Allah accepts nothing but a great deal of it. As for justice, there is no concession in it, whether at times of hardship or of ease. Even if justice appears soft, it is stronger than injustice and is more able to eliminate falsehood than injustice. Whoever among the Arabs of Iraq was true to his covenant and did not help the enemy against you in any way, is entitled to protection and is obliged to pay the *jizyah*. As for those who claim that they were forced but did not come and join you or leave and go elsewhere, do not believe them unless you want to; if you do not want to, then cancel the deal with them and send them wherever is safe for them."¹⁶⁸

From this response we learn a number of lessons, including the following:

"Justice in ruling is the main foundation for Islam to rule and prevail, and for security and prosperity to spread in the Muslim lands. This has to do with this world. As for the Hereafter, there is no escape for the wrongdoers and oppressors, because with regard to the rights of Allah, He may forgive His slave for any transgressions, but when it comes to the rights of other people, on the Day of Resurrection Allah

¹⁶⁷ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 10/485.

¹⁶⁸ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/410.

will detain the wrongdoers and those who were wronged so that they may settle the scores among one another. With regard to remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), it must dominate the life of the Muslim, in his heart and on his lips, in all that he does, so that his thoughts are sincerely for the sake of Allah alone, he speaks only words that are pleasing to Him, and he acts only for His sake, and his main aim is to establish the remembrance of Allah on earth in word, deed and belief. If he achieves that, Allah will protect him from the confusion caused by specious arguments and whims and desires. Sa'd and the Muslims who were with him followed the instructions of the caliph and offered to those who were around them who had left their land the option of coming back, in which case they would have protection in return for paying the *jizyah*. Here we see an example of compassion and softening people's hearts. This generous treatment had the effect of making the Muslims and Islam dear to those who had broken the covenant, and after that they gradually started to enter Islam and become sincere followers of the faith."¹⁶⁹

2.5.4. 'Umar gave the *khums* of al-Qâdisiyah to the fighters, and rewarded those who had distinguished themselves in battle

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) ordered that the *khums* of al-Qâdisiyah should be given to the fighters, and Sa'd carried out the caliph's command. This *ijtihâd* of 'Umar was quite brilliant, as was his *ijtihâd* deciding to leave the land of as-Sawâd¹⁷⁰ in the hands of its people. He thought that it was in accordance with the interests of the state to distribute the

¹⁶⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/487.

¹⁷⁰ *As-Sawâd* ("black land" - in contrast to the Arabian desert) refers to the fertile lowlands of Iraq west of the Tigris. [Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 155, n. 2, quoting *Yâ'qoot*, vol. 3, p. 174] - [Translator]

khums among the *Mujāhideen*, so as to encourage them, make things easier for them, and acknowledge their efforts.¹⁷¹ 'Umar sent four swords and four horses to Sa'd, to be given as a reward to those who had done best in the war in Iraq. He gave out the swords, three to men of Banu Asad, namely Ḥammāl ibn Mālīk, ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr ibn Rabee'ah and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid; and the fourth he gave to 'Āṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi. He gave one of the horses to al-Qa'qā' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and the other three to al-Yarboo'iyeen, as a reward to them for the battle of Aghwāth.¹⁷² These are some of the means which 'Umar used to motivate the *Mujāhideen* and the Muslims to achieve noble aims.

2.5.5. How 'Umar restored the dignity of Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah

Zuhrah returned from his pursuit of the remnants of the Persian army. After killing Jalinus, one of the Persian commanders, az-Zuhrah took his possessions and put on the armour that Jalinus had worn. The prisoners who were with Sa'd recognized it and said, "These are the possessions of Jalinus." Sa'd asked him: "Did anyone help you to kill him?" He said, "Yes." He then asked, "Who?" He said, "Allah." At that time Zuhrah was a young man who had been a leader during the *Jāhiliyah* and did well in Islam. Sa'd got angry at how quickly Zuhrah had put on the armour of Jalinus. He thought that was too much and took it away from him, saying, "Why didn't you wait for my permission?"¹⁷³ News of that reached 'Umar and he sent word to Sa'd saying, "How can you go to someone like Zuhrah,

¹⁷¹ *Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Khaleefah al-Mujtahid* by al-'Imrānī, p. 163.

¹⁷² *Khilāfat aṣ-Ṣiddeeq wa al-Fārooq* by ath-Tha'ālabī, p. 253.

¹⁷³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/391.

when he has done what he has done and there are still many battles ahead, and do something to break his spirit and discourage him? Give him back his loot and favour him over his companions by giving him five hundred more, for I have granted everyone who kills a man permission to take his possessions.” So he gave it back to him and he sold it for seventy thousand.¹⁷⁴ Thus ‘Umar restored az-Zuhrah’s dignity.¹⁷⁵

2.5.6. The martyrdom of the *mu’adh-dhin* and the Muslims’ competing to give the *adhân*

During the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, something amazing took place which is indicative of the extent of the early Muslims’ concern for religious matters and things that would bring them closer to Allah. The *mu’adh-dhin* of the Muslims was killed on that day, and when the time for prayer came, the Muslims competed for giving the *adhân*, to the extent that they almost fought with swords over it. Sa’d drew lots among them, and the man whose name was drawn gave the *adhân*.¹⁷⁶ The competition for this righteous deed is an indication of their strength of faith, for the *adhân* brings no worldly gain, status or fame. Rather the motivation for this competition was their remembering the great reward that Allah has prepared for the *mu’adh-dhins* on the Day of Resurrection. People who competed for the *adhân* would certainly compete for matters more serious than that. This is the secret of their success in jihad for the sake of Allah and in calling people to Islam.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Op. cit.

¹⁷⁵ *Al-Qâdisiyah*, p. 204.

¹⁷⁶ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/390.

¹⁷⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/480.

2.5.7. Islamic military tactics in battle

Al-Qâdisiyah was a brilliant example of Islamic military tactics. The Muslims excelled in devising tactical manoeuvres that suited the situation. We can see 'Umar's ability in general mobilization and compulsory conscription, and using all available resources. In this battle the caliph used all available resources, both general troops and an elite force of Muslims. He wrote to Sa'd, instructing him to choose men with horses and weapons who were experienced and courageous. In this battle, Sa'd gathered seventy-odd of those who had been present at Badr, three hundred and umpteen of those who had been Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) after the oath of allegiance at ar-Riḍwân, three hundred of those who had been present at the Conquest of Makkah and seven hundred of the sons of the *Ṣaḥâbah*. He did not leave any leader, wise man, prominent man, orator or poet but he sent him against them; he sent the best and most prominent of the people against the enemy. Thus he used all material and moral resources in this battle.

In the mobilization for this battle we see a new idea that was previously unknown to the Muslims: Sa'd did not wait in Ṣirâr until his army was complete before setting off for Iraq; rather he set out with four thousand men and reached the battle site in al-Qâdisiyah with seventeen thousand. This was an innovative way of mobilizing the army which was unknown to the Muslims before 'Umar. In his letters to both al-Muthanna and Sa'd, 'Umar told them where this decisive battle was to be fought, and that was at al-Qâdisiyah. 'Umar was the first Muslim leader to use maps in studying the land and environment of the battle, when he asked Sa'd to describe the land to him in a detailed letter, telling him where the Muslim camps were, so that it was as if he could see it, and to give him a clear picture of the Muslims' situation. Sa'd wrote him a letter in which he described in detail the geography of al-Qâdisiyah between the ditch and the al-

'Ateek river and what lay to the right and left, then he described the environment in the surrounding land, and told him that the local inhabitants were hostile towards the Muslims. Based on this, the caliph made his tactical and strategic decisions.¹⁷⁸ From the time they arrived in the enemy's land, the Muslims used the tactic of raiding enemy supplies and exhausting them in this manner. These raids met the army's need for supplies and in addition to that they also served another important purpose, which was sapping the energy of the enemy and the ability of the local people to withstand the burdens and suffering of war. The Muslims also used the tactic of ambushing in their skirmishes with the Persians before al-Qâdisiyah and in their efforts to exhaust the enemy and weaken their morale. Bakeer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Laythi, along with a group of Muslim horsemen, ambushed a caravan in a stand of date palms on the road to aş-Saneen, in which the sister of Azâdmard the son of Azâdhbah, the ruler of al-Heerah, was being taken as a bride to the ruler of aş-Saneen. When the caravan reached the place of ambush, the Muslims attacked it. Bakeer broke the back of Sheerzâd the son of Azâdhbah, the brother of the bride, who was at the head of the cavalry that was riding ahead of the caravan. The horses fled, galloping away with their riders. The Muslims seized all the other loads, and captured the daughter of Azâdhbah, along with thirty womenfolk of the chieftains and one hundred followers, and the value of the goods they were carrying with them is unknown.¹⁷⁹

In this battle the Muslims changed their tactics according to new developments on the battlefield. On the first day we see them trying to tackle the elephants, cutting their ropes after shooting them with arrows, until they fled from the battlefield. They were awaiting reinforcements from Syria, and they brought the reinforcements to

¹⁷⁸ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, Pp. 271, 272.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 273.

the battlefield in groups, one after another, to alarm the enemy with their apparent numbers. Then they tried a brilliant trick of dressing up their camels and putting masks on them to make them look like elephants. They sent them into the enemy ranks, where they terrified the horses and made them flee. On the third day, the Muslims again tackled the Persian elephants which were protected by horsemen and foot soldiers. They attacked the biggest elephant, stabbing it in the eyes and cutting off its trunk; the elephants fled, and the Persians and Muslims became on an equal footing in the battlefield after the Persians lost their elephants, which were like tanks. When the Muslims saw that the fight was going to be a lengthy one, they decided on a general attack. They set their ranks in order and marched as one. As soon as the enemy began to retreat and the core of the army became exposed, Rustam, the leader of the enemy army, became their target. When they finished off Rustam, the Persian army suffered a crushing defeat. Thus we see that the methods used by the Muslims in this battle were not restricted to traditional methods of fighting, rather they responded to every situation with what was best. They moved away from primitive methods such as single combat to tactical moves, such as disguising their camels, cutting the ropes of the elephants, stabbing them in the eye and cutting off their trunks, and using classical methods of fighting such as targeting the leader. This battle was distinguished by mobilization along tribal lines, the advantage of which was that there was competition among the tribes in fighting.¹⁸⁰ These are some of the Islamic military methods used by the *Mujāhideen* in al-Qādisiyah.

¹⁸⁰ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islāmi*, Pp. 274, 275.

2.6. The conquest of al-Madâ'in (Ctesiphon)

Sa'd stayed in al-Qâdisiyah for two months, awaiting instructions from 'Umar, until there came the command to conquer al-Madâ'in and to leave the women and children in al-'Ateeq with many soldiers around them. He told him that the soldiers who stayed behind should have a share of the booty too, because they were staying behind to guard the families of the Muslims. Sa'd did that and set out with the army towards the end of Shawwâl. The remnants of the defeated army, among whom were the remaining commanders who were determined to defend themselves, had gone to Bâbil. The cities and towns of Persia began to fall one after another. The Muslims conquered al-Burs, then Bâbil after crossing the Euphrates, then Koothâ, then Sâbât, part of it by force and part of it by means of a peace deal.¹⁸¹ The organized campaign of the Muslims continued until they reached al-Madâ'in. 'Umar told Sa'd to be kind to the peasants and to fulfil the covenants with them, and a huge number of peasants came under Muslim protection. The peasants were moved by the attitude, justice and equality of the Muslim army, which stemmed from their great religion, where their leader and the least one among the common folk were equal before the greater truth. There was no oppression, no corruption in the land, and they were no longer subject to tyranny or enslavement such as they used to suffer. They became slaves of Allah alone.

Sa'd headed towards al-Madâ'in, on 'Umar's orders. He sent the vanguard of the army on ahead, under the leadership of Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah, followed by 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'attam with a part of the army, and Sharḥabeel ibn as-Samaṭ with another part, then Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, whom he had made his deputy

¹⁸¹ *Imâm al-Wafa'*, p. 82.

instead of Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah.¹⁸² Then Sa'd joined them with the rest of the army, and appointed Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah in command of the rear guard.

Zuhrah, at the head of the vanguard, headed towards al-Madâ'in, which was the capital of the Persian state. The city straddled the Tigris west and east. The part which lay to the west of the river was called Bahurseer and the part that lay to the east was called Asbaneer and Ctesiphon. Zuhrah arrived at Bahurseer and started to lay siege to the city. Then Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs took the Muslim army, accompanied by the commander of his forces, his nephew Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâs, to the western part of al-Madâ'in, where the king of Persia, Yazdagird, was. The Muslims besieged the city for two months, with the Persians coming out sometimes to fight the Muslims, but unable to defeat them.

Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah was struck by an arrow, because he was wearing chain-mail that had a hole in it. They had said to him, "Why don't you get this hole fixed so that arrows cannot penetrate it?" He said, "Why?" They said, "We fear for you." He said, "I will be dear to Allah if an arrow misses all these soldiers and comes to me through this hole and strikes me firmly." And he was indeed dear to Allah as he had hoped, and he was the first of the Muslims to be struck by an arrow that day. It struck him firmly through that hole, and some of them said, "Pull it out from him." He said, "Let me be, for I will still be able to carry on if it is still in me, and I hope that I can still strike some of them." He marched towards the enemy and struck Shahrâyâr, who was from Astakhar, and killed him.¹⁸³

The Muslims continued the siege for two months, using twenty catapults that the Persians who were allied with them had

¹⁸² *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/155.

¹⁸³ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/454.

made for them, with which they scared the Persians. This indicates that the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) did not neglect any material means of victory if they were able to use it, and they fully understood the words of Allah,

﴿And make ready against them all you can of power﴾ (*Qur'an* 8: 60), — in addition to their excellence in terms of spiritual means of victory, the most important of which are relying on Allah, remembering Him (*dhikr*) and calling upon Him (*du'ā*).

2.6.1. Allah is with His close friends by His support and help

It was narrated that Anas ibn al-Halees said: "Whilst we were besieging Bahurseer, a messenger looked out at us and said, 'The king says to you, is there any way to make a peace deal by which we will have what is on our side between the Tigris and our mountain, and you will have what is on your side between the Tigris and your mountain? Are you not satisfied, may you never be satisfied?' Abu Mufazzir al-Aswad ibn Qutbah spoke up before anyone else, and Allah caused him to speak words that neither he nor we understood. The man went back and we saw them crossing the river to the east of al-Madā'in. We asked, 'O' Abu Mufazzir, what did you say to him?' He said, 'By the One Who sent Muhammad with the truth, I do not know what it was but I feel content, and I hope that I was made to say something good.' The people came asking him the same question, one after another, until Sa'd heard of that and came to us. He said, 'O' Abu Mufazzir, what did you say? For by Allah they are running away," and he told him the same as he had told us. He called out to the Persians but no one came out of the city except one man who asked for safe passage, which we granted to him. He said, "There is no one left inside, what is stopping you?" So the men entered the city

and conquered it. We did not find anyone or anything inside the city, except a few prisoners whom we took captive. We asked them and that man why the people had fled, and they said: "The king sent word to you offering a peace treaty and you told him that there would never be any peace treaty between us and you, until we eat honey in Koothâ." The king said, "What is this? The angels are speaking on their lips and answering us on behalf of the Arabs. By Allah, what this man says indicates that we are going to be finished, so seek protection on the other side of the city."¹⁸⁴

2.6.2. The verses which Sa'd recited when he reached Madhlam Sabât

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ؓ) stopped in Madhlam Sabât after Hâshim and those who were with him came to Bahurseer, which was the western part of al-Madâ'in. When Sa'd stopped in that place, he recited the words of Allah,

«And warn [O' Muhammad] mankind of the Day when the torment will come unto them; then the wrongdoers will say: 'Our Lord! Respite us for a little while, we will answer Your Call and follow the Messengers!' [It will be said]: 'Had you not sworn aforetime that you would not leave [the world for the Hereafter].'» (*Qur'an* 14: 44)

He recited this verse because in that place there were troops of Chosroes called Boorân, who swore by Allah every day that the Persian kingdom would never perish so long as they lived.¹⁸⁵ Zuhrah ibn al-Hawiyah defeated them and scattered them before he was martyred.¹⁸⁶ When the Muslims entered Bahurseer, in the middle of

¹⁸⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/455.

¹⁸⁵ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/451; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/160.

¹⁸⁶ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/160.

the night, they saw the white palace which was the palace of Chosroes. ʔirār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: “*Allāhu Akbar*, the white (palace) of Chosroes! This is what Allah and His Messenger promised,” and they continued to say *takbeer* until dawn came.¹⁸⁷

2.6.3. Consultation between Sa’d and his troops about crossing the river

When Sa’d realized that Chosroes had crossed the river to the eastern part of al-Madā’in, taking all the boats with him, he became confused. The enemy was in front of him, with nothing between them except the river, but there was no way of crossing it because there were no boats. He was afraid that his enemy would move on and it would become difficult to finish them off. Then some of the Persians came to Sa’d and showed him a ford where they could cross the river with some risk. Sa’d refused and hesitated, then the river burst its banks and its water turned black and started foaming because the water was running so fast. At that point Sa’d saw a good dream in which he saw the Muslim horses crossing the river, and he interpreted the dream as meaning that they would cross. He gathered the people and praised and glorified Allah, then he said: “Your enemies have protected themselves from you by means of this river and you cannot reach them, but they can reach you, if they wish, in their boats. There is nothing behind you to make you fear an attack from the rear, for the previous *Mujāhideen* have taken care of them for you. I think that you should hasten to launch jihad against your enemy, and I have decided to cross this river and go after them.” They all said, “May Allah guide us and you; do it.”¹⁸⁸

We learn the following lessons from this report:

¹⁸⁷ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/451.

¹⁸⁸ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 11/165.

We are reminded that Allah is with His believing close friends and supports and helps them. The good dreams that Sa'd (ؓ) saw were from Allah, and they made him steadfast and encouraged him to go ahead with this matter, the consequences of which were unknown, and Allah would cause the consequences to be in the believers' favour. The river suddenly started to flow quickly in an unusual manner, and it would appear that this was in the Persians' interests, because it would prevent the Muslims from attempting to cross the river. But in fact it was in the Muslims' interests, because it gave the *kāfirs* a sense of security and they were unprepared for a sudden attack by the Muslims. They could not carry with them all that they wanted when they ran away. The *Ṣaḥābah* were greatly cheered by this dream of a righteous man, and it was a factor that encouraged them to go ahead. They thought positively of Allah and considered good dreams as a means of support from Him. The Muslim leaders at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs were, for the most part, decisive men who made the most of every opportunity to motivate their troops with their enthusiasm and strength of faith. So Sa'd (ؓ) ordered his army to cross over to the enemy with the weapons of sincerity and piety, content with his troops' level of faith. So he went ahead, relying upon the help of Allah, then upon the high level of faith among his men. The *Ṣaḥābah* and the *Tābi'een* who were with them were characterized by their complete obedience to their leaders. They regarded this obedience as a *shar'ī* obligation and a righteous deed through which they drew closer to Allah.¹⁸⁹

2.6.4. Crossing the river and the conquest of al-Madā'in

Sa'd told the people to cross the river, saying, "Who can protect the east side of the river, so that the people may cross safely?"

¹⁸⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 11/167.

He delegated 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, who was a strong and tough man, to protect it, and he sent with him six hundred elite troops, putting 'Âṣim in charge of them. He marched with them until they reached the bank of the Tigris, then he said: "Who will come with me to defend the river bank from your enemy, and we will protect you until you have crossed?" Sixty strong men joined him and they crossed the Tigris, and the rest of the six hundred followed them. Thus from the Muslim army was formed an elite group numbering six hundred who were known as the Ahwâl squadron. From them 'Âṣim selected sixty men under his own leadership to form the vanguard of this group. This was wise planning, first on the part of Sa'd, then 'Âṣim, because facing difficulties and taking risks cannot be done by a large number, rather it should be done by the strongest and toughest who have the best fighting skills, even if they are few. If others who were less qualified and less courageous joined this group then retreated when the enemy attacked, this would cause the defeat of the entire group.¹⁹⁰

'Âṣim crossed the river with sixty men on horseback. It is reported that the scouts who went on ahead to the other side were: Asamm Bani Wallâd at-Teemi, al-Kalaj aḍ-Ḍabbi, Abu Mufazzir al-Aswad ibn Quṭbah, Sharahbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi, Ḥajl al-'Ajli, Mâlik ibn Ka'b al-Hamadâni and a young man from Banu al-Ḥârith ibn Ka'b. When the Persians saw them, they prepared horsemen to fight them, and they met near the eastern bank of the river. 'Âṣim said, "Spears, spears!" and directed them to aim them at their eyes. They met in battle and the Muslims aimed at their eyes. The Persians fled towards the riverbank with the Muslims stabbing at their horses with their spears to make them run away faster. They started galloping away and their riders could not control them. The Muslims

¹⁹⁰ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/168.

pursued them and killed most of them; those who got away fled one-eyed. Then the rest of the six hundred caught up with their brothers and they took control of the eastern bank of the river.¹⁹¹

2.6.5. The Muslims cross the river

When Sa'd saw that 'Āṣim had gained control of the riverbank, he gave the people permission to cross the river. He said: "Say, 'We seek the help of Allah and we put out trust in Him. Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the best Disposer of affairs. There is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the Almighty'." Most of the army crossed over on horseback, with the horses wading deep in the foaming and black water of the Tigris and the people chatting as they used to chat whilst travelling on land.¹⁹² The one who was travelling alongside Sa'd in the water was Salmân al-Fârîsi, and the horses started swimming with them on their backs, and Sa'd was saying: "Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the best Disposer of affairs. Allah will most certainly grant victory to His friends and will support His religion. Allah will defeat His enemies so long as there is no transgression or sin among the army that outweighs their good deeds."¹⁹³ Salmân said to him: "Islam is new and by Allah the rivers and seas have been subjugated to them as the land is subjugated. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Salmân, people will leave (Islam) in crowds just as they entered it in crowds."¹⁹⁴

What Salmân (ﷺ) meant by saying, "Islam is new" is that it was still alive and its followers were strong in faith and proud of it.

¹⁹¹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/456, 457.

¹⁹² *At-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 11/169.

¹⁹³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/459.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Islam was the focal point of their lives for which they lived and died; they called people to it and they defended it. But later on there would come generations who would inherit this religion and would not be Muslims by choice, and it would not be the focal point of their concerns and feelings, rather all their concern would be focused on worldly achievements and enjoying the pleasures of this world; Islam would become a secondary concern in their lives. At that point they would go out of Islam in crowds just as they had entered it in crowds.¹⁹⁵

The Muslims all crossed the river safe and sound, with no harm coming to anyone. No one fell in the river except a man from the tribe of Bâriq who was called Gharqadah, who fell from the back of a palomino horse. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr turned his horse around to go and help him, and he held on to his arm until he brought him across the river. The Bâriqi, who was one of the toughest of men, said: "Sisters are no longer able to give birth to sons like you, O' Qa'qâ'!" He was a maternal uncle of al-Qa'qâ'.¹⁹⁶

The Persians were amazed when the Muslims crossed the river, and Yazdagird fled, heading for Hulwân. The Muslims entered the city unopposed, and Sa'd stayed in the white palace, which he took as a place of prayer and recited the verses:

«How many of gardens and springs that they [Fir'awn's (Pharaoh's) people] left behind, and green crops [fields] and goodly places, and comforts of life wherein they used to take delight! Thus [it was]! And We made other people inherit them.» (*Qur'an* 44: 25-28)

And he prayed eight *rak'ahs*, the prayer of victory.

The first ones to enter al-Madâ'in were the Ahwâl squadron, then the

¹⁹⁵ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/170.

¹⁹⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/459.

al-Kharsa' squadron.¹⁹⁷ The Ahwâl squadron was led by 'Āṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and the al-Kharsa' squadron was led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr.¹⁹⁸

2.6.6. Examples of the Muslims' honesty

"I praise Allah and I am content with His reward"

When the Muslims arrived in al-Madâ'in and gathered their plunder, a man came with something which he gave to the one who was in charge of the plunder. He and the one who was with him said: "We have never seen anything like this, we have never gotten anything like this or anything that even comes close." They asked, "Did you take anything from it?" He said, "By Allah, were it not for Allah, we would not have brought it to you." They realized that this man was of good caliber and said, "Who are you?" He said, "No, by Allah, I will not tell you lest you or anyone else praise me. But I praise Allah and am content with His reward." A man followed him until he went back to his companions, then he asked about him and found out that he was 'Āmir ibn 'Abd Qays.¹⁹⁹

'Aṣmah ibn al-Ḥārith aḍ-Ḍabbi said: "I went out with those who went out seeking booty, and I followed a well-travelled path where I saw a man on a donkey. He ran away and caught up with another one who was in front of him. They turned and ran with their donkeys until they came to a river where the bridge was broken. They stayed there until I caught up with them, then they parted. One of them threw something at me so I chased him and killed him, and the other one ran away. I went back to the two donkeys and brought them to the one who was collecting the plunder. He looked at what the first

¹⁹⁷ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/67.

¹⁹⁸ *Itmām al-Wafa'*, p. 85.

¹⁹⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

one was carrying and there were two saddlebags. In one was a horse made of gold with a saddle of gold and a bridle of rubies and emeralds set in silver, and reins of similar fashion. And there was a knight made of silver, studded with jewels. In the other bag there was a camel of silver on which was a saddle of gold and reins of gold. All of that was adorned with rubies, and on it was a man made of gold studded with gems. Chosroes used to keep them in the columns in his palace on which their history was engraved.²⁰⁰

The goodness of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Âşim

Al-Qa'qâ' caught up with a Persian and killed him. He had with him two boxes and two bags. In one of the two boxes there were five swords and in the other there were six. These were the swords of the Persians and the kings with whom the Persians had fought wars. Among them were the sword of Chosroes and the sword of Heraclius. In the two bags were some shields that had belonged to kings, including the shield of Chosroes and the shield of Heraclius. He brought them to Sa'd, who said: "Choose one of these swords," so he chose the sword of Heraclius, and he gave him the shield of Bahrâm. The rest of them he gave to the al-Kharsa' squadron which was led by al-Qa'qâ', except for the swords of Chosroes and an-Nu'mân, which he decided to send to 'Umar so that the Arabs would hear about that, because they knew of these two men.²⁰¹

The Şahâbah's praise for the members of the army

The senior *Şahâbah* praised that army, as when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâş said: "By Allah, this army is honest. Were it not that the virtue of the people of Badr is already established, I would have said that they were better than the people of Badr."²⁰²

²⁰⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, 4/467.

²⁰² *At-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 11/181; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh said: "By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, we have not seen anyone among the people of al-Qādisiyah who prefers this world over the Hereafter. We were suspicious about three men, then we realized that we were wrong when we saw that their honesty and asceticism were unmatched." They were: Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib and Qays ibn al-Makshūh.

Greater than that was the praise of the caliph 'Umar (ؓ) himself, when he saw the *khums* from that booty, among which were the sword, belt and adornments of Chosroes. He said: "The people who sent this are indeed honest." 'Ali (ؓ) said: "You were honest so the people were honest; had you been dishonest, they would have been dishonest."²⁰³

'Umar's attitude towards this amazing booty

Following the battle of al-Qādisiyah, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas sent the cloak, sword, belt, bracelets, pants, shirt, crown and slippers of Chosroes to 'Umar; these were made of fine and expensive materials such as silk, gold and jewels. 'Umar looked at the people, and the tallest and most well-built of them was Surāqah ibn Mālik ibn Jath'am. He said: "O' Surāqah, stand up and put this on." Surāqah said, "I was hoping to keep it, so I got up and put it on." 'Umar said, "Walk over there," so he walked away. Then he said, "Come back," so he came back. Then he said, "Good, good. A Bedouin from Madlaj wearing the cloak, pants, sword, belt, crown and slippers of Chosroes. What a day, O' Surāqah, when you are wearing the clothes of Chosroes and his family. What a great honour for you and your people. Take them off." So he took them off, and 'Umar said: "O' Allah, You withheld this from Your Messenger and Prophet, who was dearer to You than me and more honoured by You than me, and You

²⁰³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

withheld it from Abu Bakr, who was dearer to You than me and more honoured by You than me, and You have given it to me. I seek refuge in You lest You have given it to me in order to test me.” Then he wept until those who were with him felt sorry for him. Then he said to ‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn ‘Awf, “I urge you to sell it and divide it before evening comes.”²⁰⁴

2.7. The battle of Jaloola’

The Persians gathered at a crossroads where routes to different cities met, in Jaloola’. They started complaining to one another and said: “If you separate you will never be united. This is the place from which we are going to depart. Let us unite against the Arabs and fight them. If we win, then this is what we want; if the outcome is otherwise, then we will have done our best.” So they united under the leadership of Maḥrân ar-Râzi. They dug a ditch around their city and surrounded it with wooden spikes, except for the routes that they used to use.

Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqâṣ wrote to ‘Umar informing him of that, and ‘Umar wrote back ordering Sa’d to send Hâshim ibn ‘Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ to Jaloola’ with twelve thousand men, putting al-Qa’qâ’ ibn ‘Amr at-Tameemi in charge of the vanguard, Mas’ar ibn Mâlik in charge of the right flank, ‘Amr ibn Mâlik ibn ‘Utbah in charge of the left flank, and ‘Umar ibn Murrah al-Juhani in charge of the rearguard. Hâshim went to them with his army and besieged them. The Persians held out for a long time, only coming out to them when they wanted to, and they engaged the Muslims in eighty skirmishes. But Allah gave the Muslims the upper hand and they defeated the *mushrikeen*, driving them onto the wooden spikes that they had set up to prevent

²⁰⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/472; *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/68.

the Muslims from advancing. Then the enemy prepared spikes of iron. Sa’d started sending horsemen as reinforcements. When the situation had gone on too long and the Persians were suffering because of the Muslims’ patience, they decided to attack, so they came out to fight. Sa’d said: “Strive your utmost for the sake of Allah, so that you might attain the fullest reward and booty. Strive for the sake of Allah.” They met and fought, and Allah sent against them a wind that made everything turn dark, so they had no choice but to stop fighting and retreat. Their horses started falling in the ditch, and they had no choice but to fill in the part of the ditch that was nearest to them so that the horses could climb out. Thus they spoiled their own fortifications.²⁰⁵

When the Muslims heard that the enemy had filled in part of the ditch, they said, “Let us charge at them again so that we may enter upon them or else die trying.” When the Muslims attacked again, they lay iron spikes down around the ditch so that the horses would not advance towards them, and they left a space where they could come out and attack the Muslims. They fought fiercely, a battle the like of which they had not fought except on the night of al-Hareer, during the campaign of al-Qādisiyah, but it was a shorter and quicker battle. Al-Qa’qā’ ibn ‘Amr ended up at the gate near the place where the ditch had been filled in, so he seized the gate and ordered someone to cry out, “O’ Muslims, your commander has entered the ditch of the people and seized it. Come to him and do not let those who are between you and him prevent you from entering it.” He issued this command in order to strengthen the Muslims. So the Muslims attacked, and they were in no doubt that Hāshim was there. No one could stop them until they reached the gate by the ditch, where they found that al-Qa’qā’ ibn ‘Amr had seized it, and the *mushrikeen* had started to flee right and left from the gate where their

²⁰⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/475.

ditch was. They died in a tactic prepared by the Muslims, losing their horses to the iron spikes that they had prepared for the Muslims, and ending up as foot soldiers. The Muslims pursued them, not sparing any but the most insignificant of them. On that day Allah killed one hundred thousand of them, and the ground was strewn with the bodies of the slain.²⁰⁶

2.7.1. "Our army made us talk because of their deeds"

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs sent Ziyâd ibn Ubayh with the financial account to 'Umar. Ziyâd was the one who kept records of the troops. When he came to 'Umar he spoke to him about what he had brought and described it to him. 'Umar said: "Can you stand up and tell the people what you have told me?" So he stood up and told the people of the victories they had won and what they had done, and how they had penetrated deeply into the enemy's land. 'Umar said, "This is an eloquent speaker." Ziyâd said, "Our army made us talk because of their deeds."

2.7.2. 'Umar's attitude concerning the booty of Jaloola'

The battle of Jaloola' ended in victory for the Muslims, and they collected a huge amount of booty. They send the *khums* to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ), who said when he saw it: "By Allah, this should not be kept under any roof until I divide it." 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and 'Abdullâh ibn Arqam spent the night guarding it in the courtyard of the mosque. The following morning, 'Umar came with the people and took the covers off the booty. When he saw the rubies, emeralds and jewels he wept. 'Abdur-Rahmân said to him, "Why are

²⁰⁶ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/475.

you weeping, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? By Allah, this is a time for giving thanks." 'Umar said, "By Allah, that is not why I am weeping, but Allah never gives this to a people but they start to envy one another and hate one another, and if they start to envy one another that will cause enmity and division among them."²⁰⁷

This is a kind of intuition that is based on faith, for the believer who has deep faith sees the consequences of what is happening in such a way that never even crosses the mind of anyone else. His fear for the believers lest they be affected by worldly matters in such a way that they become alienated from one another has a great impact on him and makes his tears flow in front of people. It is amazing that tears would flow from a man who had achieved such power that all people feared him, Muslims, *kāfirs* and hypocrites alike, but this is the compassion with which Allah (ﷻ) has adorned the hearts of the believers, so that they become as Allah has described them:

﴿Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate [in prayer], seeking Bounty from Allah and [His] Good Pleasure. The mark of them [i.e. of their Faith] is on their faces [foreheads] from the traces of prostration [during prayers]. This is their description in the *Tawrât* [Torah]. But their description in the *Injeel* [Gospel] is like a [sown] seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe [i.e. all those who follow Islamic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad till the Day of Resurrection] and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward [i.e. Paradise].﴾

(*Qur'an* 48: 29)

²⁰⁷ Op. cit., 4/480.

2.8. The conquest of Ramhormuz

The Persians had started to regroup yet again at the incitement of their king Yazdagird. They gathered in Ramhormuz under the leadership of al-Hormuzân. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs informed the caliph of their gathering, and he ordered him to prepare an army from the people of Koofa under the leadership of an-Nu'mân ibn al-Muqarrin. He also ordered Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari to prepare an army from Baṣra under the leadership of Sahl ibn 'Adiyy. When the two armies met, Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm was to assume leadership of both, and everyone who came to him would be counted as reinforcements for him.

An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin set out with the people from Koofah, and headed to meet al-Hormuzân, who was in Ramhormuz. When al-Hormuzân heard that an-Nu'mân was headed his way, he wanted to attack, hoping to isolate an-Nu'mân with the support of the Persians who had started to join him. An-Nu'mân and al-Hormuzân met in Arbak, where they fought intensely. Allah caused an-Nu'mân to defeat al-Hormuzân, who evacuated Ramhormuz and fled to Tastar.

Meanwhile, Sahl ibn 'Adiyy came with the people from Baṣra, heading for Ramhormuz. News of the battle reached them in Sooq al-Ahwâz, and they heard that al-Hormuzân had run away to Tastar, so they headed for Tastar as did an-Nu'mân with the troops from Koofah.²⁰⁸

2.9. The conquest of Tastar

The army of an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and the army of Sahl ibn 'Adiyy reached Tastar, where they united under the leadership of

²⁰⁸ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/61, 62.

Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm. Abu Sabrah asked 'Umar for reinforcements, and he sent Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari who become the leader of the army from Baṣrah, and Abu Sabrah carried on as commander of the entire army. The Muslims besieged Tastar for several months, during which they faced the enemy in eighty battles. The heroism of the champions became apparent in single combat, and several of them became famous for killing one hundred in single combats, apart from those whom they killed during the battles themselves. Among them were: al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik, Majza'ah ibn Thawr, Ka'b ibn Soor, and Abu Tameemah from among the people of Baṣrah. Among the people from Koofah were: Ḥabeeb ibn Qurrah, Rab'â ibn 'Âmir, and 'Âmir ibn 'Abdullâh al-Aswad.²⁰⁹

During the final battle, the Muslims met their enemies and the fighting grew intense. The Muslims called out to al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik, saying, "O' Barâ', urge your Lord to defeat them for us." He said, "O' Allah, defeat them for us, and make me a martyr." Then the Muslims continued fighting and defeated their enemy, forcing them to cross their own trenches and pursuing them. When the going got too tough for the Persians and they could no longer bear the siege, two of them made contact with the Muslims independently of one another and told them that the way to conquer the city was through the place where water came out. This news reached an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and he urged his companions to do something. The heroes of the armies of Koofah and Baṣrah met in that place at night, and entered the city thereby. Then they said *takbeer* and those who were on the outside also said *takbeer*. They opened the gates and destroyed the troops who had been guarding them after a little resistance.²¹⁰ During this battle, al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik and Majza'ah ibn Thawr were martyred when they were shot by al-Hormuzân. Their martyrdom

²⁰⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/202.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, 11/204.

came after the Muslims had won the battle and al-Hormuzân, the Persian commander, had fled to the citadel. The Muslims who had entered via the water-way encircled the citadel, and when they saw him they rushed towards him, but he said to them, "What do you want? You may think that I am cornered, but I have in my quiver one hundred arrows, and by Allah you will never be able to reach me so long as I have one arrow left, and not one arrow will miss its target. What is the point of taking me captive if I give you one hundred casualties, dead or wounded?" They asked, "What do you want?" He said, "I want to put my hand in yours and go to 'Umar, and he can do whatever he wants with me." They said, "We grant you that." So he threw down his quiver and let them take control of him. They put him in chains and kept an eye on him, and sent him to the caliph 'Umar (ؓ). Then they took everything that was in the city of wealth and stored goods, of which they shared out four-fifths, giving each horseman three thousand *dirhams* and each foot soldier one thousand.²¹¹

We learn the following from the campaign of Tastar:

*"I would not like to have instead of that prayer
the whole world and everything in it"*

Anas ibn Mâlik, the brother of al-Barâ', said: "I was there during the siege of Tastar when dawn broke and the fighting intensified, and they could not pray. We did not pray until after the sun had risen, then we prayed. We were with Abu Moosa and Allah (ﷻ) granted us victory. Anas ibn Mâlik al-Anṣârî said, 'I would not like to have instead of that prayer the whole world and everything in it.'²¹²

Among the great praise that was received by al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik was

²¹¹ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/63, 64.

²¹² *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Asr ar-Râshida*, p. 223.

when the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «“How many people there are who are unkempt and dusty, wearing scruffy clothes and no one would pay any attention to them, but if they were to adjure Allah to do something He would fulfil it. One such is al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik.”»²¹³

Al-Barâ' was a person whose *du'âs* were answered, and the people knew that because of this hadith, so during this battle they asked him to pray to Allah to defeat the enemy. Despite this great praise from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), al-Barâ' did not become proud or arrogant, rather he remained the humble man who would take great risks in battle that brought great results, without any interest in becoming a leader. When he asked Allah to grant victory to the Muslims, which would bring a great honour for them and for Islam, he did not forget about himself, and he asked Allah for the most precious thing that a believer whose faith is strong can ask for, namely martyrdom. Allah answered his prayer, defeating the enemies and granting him martyrdom on that day.²¹⁴

2.9.1. The caliph 'Umar and al-Hormuzân

Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm, the Muslim commander in that battle, sent a delegation to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and sent al-Hormuzân with them. When they entered Madeenah, they dressed al-Hormuzân in his usual clothes of brocade woven with gold, and they put on his head his crown studded with rubies, and put on his other adornments, so that 'Umar and the Muslims could see him as he usually appeared. Then they took him out to the people, looking for 'Umar in his house, but they did not find him. They asked after him and were told that he had gone to the mosque to meet a delegation coming from Koofah. They went looking for him in the mosque, and did not see him. When

²¹³ *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Kitâb al-Manâqib*, 5/650, hadith no. 3854.

²¹⁴ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/204.

they came out, they passed by some children of Madeenah who were playing. They said, "What are you looking for? Are you looking for the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? He is sleeping on the right hand side of the mosque, using his burnous for a pillow." 'Umar had gone to meet the delegation from Koofah, wearing a burnous. When he had finished speaking to them and they had left him alone, he took off his burnous, rolled it up to make a pillow, and went to sleep. They set off, with a crowd of onlookers, and when they saw him they sat down near him. There was no one else in the mosque, asleep or awake, apart from him, and he had his stick in his hand. Al-Hormuzân asked, "Where is 'Umar?" They said, "That's him."

The delegation gestured to the people to be quiet, and al-Hormuzân listened to the people who were with him and asked, "Where are his guards and gatekeepers?" They said, "He does not have any guards or gatekeepers, or any scribe." He said, "He should be a prophet." They said, "He does the deeds of the Prophets."

'Umar woke up because of the noise made by the people, and sat up straight. Then he looked at al-Hormuzân and asked, "Is this al-Hormuzân?" They said, "Yes." He examined him and what he was wearing and said, "I seek refuge with Allah from the Fire, and I seek the help of Allah." And he said, "Praise be to Allah Who has humiliated this one and his supporters by Islam. O' Muslims, adhere to this religion, and follow the guidance of your Prophet (ﷺ), and do not be deceived by this world, for it is all deceit." The delegation said, "This is the ruler of al-Ahwâz, speak to him." He said, "No, not until there is nothing left on him of this adornment." So everything was taken off him except something that was left to cover him, and they put a scruffy garment on him. Then 'Umar said, "Well, O' Hormuzân, how did you see the consequences of treachery and the punishment of Allah?" He said, "O' 'Umar, during the *Jâhiliyah* Allah was not part of the dispute between us and you. We defeated

you because He was not with us or with you. Now that He is with you, you have defeated us." 'Umar said, "You defeated us during the *Jāhiliyah* because you were united and we were divided." Then 'Umar asked, "What is your excuse for breaking the truce time after time?" He said, "I am afraid that you will kill me before I tell you." He said, "Do not be afraid of that." He asked for water and it was brought to him in a coarse vessel. He said, "Even if I die of thirst, I cannot drink from such a vessel." Then it was brought to him in a vessel that pleased him. His hand started shaking and he said, "I am afraid that you will kill me whilst I am drinking this water." 'Umar said, "Nothing will happen to you until you have drunk it." He spilled it and 'Umar said, "Give him some more; do not let him be killed and be thirsty at the same time." He said, "I do not need any water. I just wanted to ensure my safety." 'Umar said to him, "I will kill you." He said, "You granted me safety." He said, "You are lying." Anas said, "He is telling the truth, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you did grant him safety." He said, "Woe to you, O' Anas, would I grant safety to the killer of Majza'ah and al-Barâ'? By Allah, you will find me a way out or I will punish you!" He said, "You said to him, 'Nothing will happen to you until you tell me,' and you said, 'Nothing will happen to you until you drink it.' " Those who were around him said something similar. 'Umar turned to al-Hormuzân and said, "You deceived me, and by Allah I would not accept to be deceived except by a Muslim." Then he became Muslim, and 'Umar allocated to him a stipend of two thousand, and let him stay in Madeenah.²¹⁵

2.10. The conquest of Jundaisaboor

When Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm had finished conquering the land of al-Soos, he went out with his troops to Jundaisaboor, which

²¹⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/66.

was being besieged by Zurr ibn 'Abdullâh ibn Kulayb. They stayed there, fighting and clashing with the enemy, until one of the Muslims offered them security. The conquest of this city and that of Nahawand were two months apart. The Muslims were surprised when its gates were opened and the people came out with sheep for grazing and goods for trading, and the people came out of the citadel. The Muslims sent word to them, asking what was going on. They said, "You have granted security to us, and we have accepted. We will pay the *jizyah* to you in return for your protection." They said, "We did not do that." They said, "We are not lying." The Muslims made enquiries amongst themselves, and it turned out that a slave called Maknaf, who was originally from that city, was the one who had written to them. They said, "He is just a slave." They said, "We do not know who among you is free and who is a slave. We received this offer of security and we are bound by it, we accepted it and we will not change our minds. If you want to betray us, go ahead." So they let them be, and they wrote to 'Umar telling him of that. He wrote back saying, "Allah has placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of fulfilling treaties, and you will not be sincere until you fulfil your promises. If you are in doubt, then accept the deal and fulfil the covenant towards them." So the Muslims fulfilled the promise and left them alone.²¹⁶

These examples show how the Muslims excelled over their *kâfir* enemies in the field of good attitudes. Undoubtedly this moral superiority was one of the basic reasons that motivated the *kuffâr* to enter Islam in such huge numbers and with such alacrity.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/72.

²¹⁷ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/217.

2.10.1. An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and the city of Kaskar

An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin was the governor of Kaskar. He wrote to 'Umar saying, "The likeness of me and Kaskar is that of a young man with a painted and perfumed prostitute by his side. I adjure you by Allah to relieve me of my post in Kaskar, and send me to join one of the Muslim armies." So 'Umar wrote to him, saying, "Go and join the army in Nahawand, and you are in charge of them."²¹⁸

3. The Battle of Nahawand (The Conquest of Conquests) – The Fourth Stage, 21 A.H.

The Muslims had been victorious over the Persian armies in numerous consecutive battles, and they pursued the remnants of those armies without giving them the chance to catch their breath. Between their crushing victory in the battle of al-Qâdisiyah in Iraq and the decisive battle in Nahawand there were four years, during which the Muslims achieved one victory after another. Their armies would have gone on to put an end to the last remnants of the army of an aging empire, were it not for the orders of the caliph 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), who told them to stop at the Zagharoos (Zagros) mountains and not go beyond that point. Those orders were for the purpose of reorganizing the army which was exhausted from continual fighting, and to organize the administration of the conquered regions.²¹⁹

The defeats that the Muslims inflicted on the Persians one after another, especially after al-Qâdisiyah, made the Persians angry and

²¹⁸ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/109.

²¹⁹ See: *al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*.

resentful. It seems that it was not enough to put a final end to their resistance. Their leaders and commanders wrote to their king Yazdagird, urging him to resume the fight, so he decided to do that. He made preparations to go back and fight the Muslims with whatever he had left in his land of fortresses and strongholds. He wrote to the people of the mountains, from al-Bâb to Sajistân and Khorasân telling them to mobilize to meet the Muslims. He designated Nahawand as the meeting-point, choosing it for the final resistance and decisive battle because it was well protected, surrounded by mountains on all sides and only accessible through rugged and difficult mountain passes. The Persians gathered in this city, where Yazdagird assembled one hundred and fifty thousand fighters: thirty thousand from the area between al-Bâb and Hulwân, sixty thousand from the area between Khorasan and Hulwân, and a similar number from the area between Sajistan and Hulwân. Yazdagird appointed al-Fayrazân in command of them.

A letter was sent to 'Umar, informing him of these developments and asking for his instructions, explaining the situation to him from all aspects. In Madeenah, 'Umar assembled the wise men of the Muslims and consulted them concerning the matter, then he decided to send an army to fight the Persians in their last stronghold, Nahawand. At that time an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani was the governor of Kaskar, and he had written a letter to the caliph in which he had said, "The likeness of me and Kaskar is that of a young man with a painted and perfumed prostitute by his side. I adjure you by Allah to relieve me of my post in Kaskar, and send me to join one of the Muslim armies."²²⁰ 'Umar consulted his *Shoora* assembly and decided to appoint an-Nu'mân as commander of the Muslim army in Nahawand. The caliph drew up a plan to mobilize the Muslim army in the following fashion:

²²⁰ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/109.

- ❖ An-Nu'mān ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani (the governor of Kaskar) was to be the commander-in-chief of the army
- ❖ Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the people of Koofah
- ❖ Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (the governor of Baṣra) was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the people of Baṣra
- ❖ 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (ibn al-Khaṭṭāb) was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the *Muhājireen* and Anṣār
- ❖ Salma ibn al-Qayyin, Ḥarmalah ibn Murayṭah, Zurr ibn Kulayb, al-Aswad ibn Rabee'ah and other Muslim commanders in al-Ahwāz and other parts of Persia were to form reserve troops that would distract the enemy

'Umar wrote to the governors and commanders with his instructions, and he managed to mobilize an army of some thirty thousand warriors.²²¹ The Muslim army, under the command of an-Nu'mān ibn Muqarrin, set off towards Nahawand, which they found to be fortified strongly, surrounded by a deep ditch, in front of which were sharp spikes which formed an obstacle for the attackers, and threatened to harm their horses by injuring their feet so that they could not longer walk. The Persian army inside the walls of the city was in a state of readiness. The army in Nahawand had been joined by those who were not present at al-Qādisiyah, and al-Fayrazān had stationed archers at the points where the Muslims were expected to attack so that they could shoot their arrows at them if they tried to advance.²²² The Muslim cavalry was faced with the spikes and the ditch beyond them, and could not cross them, whilst the Persian archers started to shoot at the Muslim troops who managed to get

²²¹ See: *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islāmi*.

²²² Ibid.

near the walls. This carried on for two days. An-Nu'mân decided to gather the top commanders of the army to study the situation, and they reached the conclusion that they should adopt the following plan, which was devised by Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi: "The Muslim cavalry would go out and start a fight with the Persians, provoking them to come out from behind their walls. When they came out, the Muslim cavalry would move back before them, so that they would think that they were retreating out of weakness and would hope to score a victory and start to chase them. The Muslim cavalry would pretend to be defeated, and whilst the Persians were outside their walls and fortifications, other Muslims who had hidden in camouflaged places would take them by surprise and ambush them far away from their fortifications."²²³

An-Nu'mân started to implement this plan, and divided his troops up into groups as follows: the first group was the cavalry, led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr; their mission was to deceive the enemy according to the plan described above, by attacking the walls of the enemy city and trying to start a fight.

The second group, under his own leadership, was to hide in concealed places and wait for the Persians to reach them, whereupon they would attack them and fight them face to face.

The third group was another detachment of cavalry, who were the strongest force of the army. Their mission was to hide in camouflaged places then attack the enemy forces from two sides.

An-Nu'mân ordered the Muslims to stay in their hideouts and not fight until he gave them permission.²²⁴ The Muslims obeyed this command and waited for the signal from an-Nu'mân to attack. Al-

²²³ See: *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/113.

²²⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/114.

Qa‘qâ‘ started to carry out the plan and succeeded brilliantly. The Persians were astounded to find themselves surrounded by the Muslim forces who were mowing them down. The *mushrikeen* started fleeing towards their fortifications, but they fell into their ditches and onto their spikes. The Muslims continued to pursue them, wielding their swords against their backs, until thousands of Persians fell into the ditch. Al-Qa‘qâ‘ pursued al-Fayrazân and managed to catch up with him and finish him off. After this battle, the Muslims entered Nahawand, then Hamadhân, after which they went on to complete their conquest of the rest of Persia without encountering any resistance worth mentioning. After Nahawand, the Persians did not regroup again, and the Muslims took over their land. Hence the battle of Nahawand was known as “the conquest of conquests.”²²⁵

In the battle of Nahawand the deep insight of ‘Umar was made manifest in several ways, such as his mobilizing Muslim troops and preventing the enemy from mobilizing; the caliph ‘Umar (ﷺ) did not stop at ordering his governors in Koofah, Baṣrah and Arabia to mobilize in order to fight the Persians, rather he ordered his commanders in al-Ahwâz and the rest of Persia to prevent the enemy from mobilizing. He instructed Salma ibn al-Qayyin, Ḥarmalah ibn Murayṭah, Zurr ibn Kulayb, al-Aswad ibn Rabee‘ah and others to stand guard at the border between Persia and al-Ahwâz, to prevent the Persians from joining the army that was being mobilized in Nahawand. Thus these commanders guarded the border and prevented reinforcements from reaching Nahawand.²²⁶

²²⁵ See: *Al-Fann al-‘Askari al-Islâmi*.

²²⁶ Ibid.

3.1. Appointment of commanders if any commanders of the army died

During the battle of Mu'tah (8 A.H. / 629 C.E.), when the Prophet (ﷺ) appointed Zayd ibn al-Hârithah as commander of the Muslims, he stipulated that if Zayd died, then Ja'far ibn Abi Tâlib was to lead the people. If Ja'far died, then 'Abdullâh ibn Rawâḥah was to take over. 'Umar did the same thing with regard to the battle of Nahawand, when he appointed an-Nu'mân in charge of the Muslims; if anything happened to an-Nu'mân, then Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamân was to take over, and if anything happened to Hudhayfah, then Nu'aym ibn Muqarrin was to take over. An-Nu'mân was distinguished by his high level of leadership, which was manifested in several ways, as follows:

3.1.1. Sending out scouts before setting out to fight

Before marching out with his army towards Nahawand, which was twenty-odd parasangs away, an-Nu'mân sent Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, 'Amr ibn Abi Salma al-'Anzi and 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib on ahead to scout out the route and find out if there were any enemy troops in the area. The three men travelled for one day and one night, then they came back and informed their commander-in-chief that there was nothing to worry about between here and Nahawand. This mission was akin to what is known nowadays as reconnaissance, where any army sends out scouts to check the route before proceeding. In addition to that, an-Nu'mân took all kinds of precautions when moving his army, keeping them in a state of readiness to fight at any moment.

3.1.2. The trick to deceive the enemy

The trick which the Muslims used to deceive the enemy in Nahawand was one of the most brilliant military manoeuvres that have ever been used by any army in history, ancient or modern. When the Muslims found themselves unable to breach the fortified walls of the city which was protected with ditches, spikes and skilled archers, they realized that the siege would take a long time and would meet with no success so long as the Persians inside the walls of the city had enough supplies to hold out for a long time. So they decided to resort to tricks aimed at drawing the enemy out so that they could fight them outside the walls in a place that they themselves had chosen. What happened was entirely in accordance with the Muslims' plan. They drew the enemy out to the places that the Muslims had chosen for the battle, hiding and then ambushing them in those places from all directions. So the Persians were taken unawares and panicked, then feeling helpless they ran away. There is no better trick that an army could use to draw out the enemy and overpower them.²²⁷

3.1.3. Choosing the time of attack

The history books speak of the patience of an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and his genius in choosing the same time for attack as that favoured by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which was just after midday when the shadows begin to lengthen and the wind is blowing. An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin attained martyrdom in this decisive battle. When news of an-Nu'mân reached the caliph he said, "Verily, to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return." He wept and grieved deeply, and asked about the martyrs, and was told some names that he did not recognize. He said, "Those are the weak and oppressed

²²⁷ See: *al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, Pp. 295, 296.

among the Muslims, but the One Who has honoured them with martyrdom knows their faces and lineages; what does it matter whether 'Umar knows them or not?"²²⁸

It is worth mentioning that among the booty of Nahawand, the Muslims found two chests filled with precious jewels from the stores of Chosroes. Hudhayfah, the commander of the army, sent them to 'Umar with as-Sâ'ib ibn al-Aqra'. When he brought them to him he said, "Put them in the *bayt al-mâl*, and go back to your division." He set off, and 'Umar sent someone after him who caught up with him in Koofah and brought him back.²²⁹ When 'Umar saw him he said, "What is this you brought to me? On the night that you departed, I dreamt all night that the angels were dragging me to these chests that were filled with fire, warning me that they would brand me with fire if I did not share them out. Take them away and sell them, and buy provisions for the Muslims." So he sold them in the market of Koofah.

May Allah be pleased with you, O' 'Umar, for you followed in the footsteps of your Prophet and Allah granted you pride and dignity and He granted pride and dignity to Islam and the Muslims. O' Allah, help us to follow in his footsteps and suffice us against the evils of innovation.²³⁰

After the battle of Nahawand, the Persian leaders from Hamadhân, Ṭabaristân and Isfahan hastened to seek peace deals with the Muslims, one after another.²³¹

²²⁸ See: *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/113.

²²⁹ Ibid, 7/114.

²³⁰ See: *Itmâm al-Wafa'*.

²³¹ Ibid, Pp. 99-101.

4. Penetration of Persian Lands

— The Fifth Stage

After the Muslim victory in the battle of Nahawand, the Persians could not offer any further resistance. ʿUmar gave the Muslims permission to penetrate deeply into the Persian lands, and after Nahawand the Muslims reached the city of Jayy, which is also known as Isfahan.²³² After a lengthy period of fighting, they made a peace deal with the Muslims and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbdullāh wrote them a document granting them peace and security. Thirty men fled from them towards Karmān and did not make a peace deal with the Muslims. In 21 A.H., Abu Moosa conquered Qom and Qashān²³³, and Suhayl ibn ʿAdiyy conquered Karmān.

4.1. The conquest of Hamadhān for the second time in 22 A.H.

When the Muslims had finished with Nahawand, they conquered Ḥulwān and Hamadhān, then the people of Hamadhān broke the treaty that they had made with al-Qaʿqāʾ ibn ʿAmr. ʿUmar wrote to Naʿeem ibn Muqarrin, telling him to march on Hamadhān. He went there and camped in a place called Thaniyat al-ʿAsl, then he went down to Hamadhān, where he conquered the surrounding land and besieged the city. They asked him for a peace deal and he made a deal with them and entered the city with twelve thousand Muslims. Whilst he was in Hamadhān, letters were exchanged between the Daylam and the leaders of Azerbaijan, who gathered in large numbers to fight Naʿeem ibn Muqarrin. He went out to meet them, accompanied by the Muslims who were with him, and they met in a

²³² One of the major cities of Persia. [Author]

²³³ Qom and Qashān: Two cities which are always mentioned together. [Author]

place called Wâj ar-Ruwâdh.²³⁴ They fought an intense battle which was on the scale of Nahawand, no less than that. Innumerable *mushrikeen* were killed, as was the king of the Daylam, who were utterly decimated. Those who were not killed in the battle fled.

Na'eem ibn Muqarrin was the first of the Muslims to fight the Daylam.²³⁵ Na'eem had written to 'Umar telling him of his encounter with them, and 'Umar was very upset and worried about that. But soon, to his surprise, mail came with good news. He asked the messenger: "Are you a *basheer* (a bringer of glad tidings)?" He said, "No, I am 'Urwah."²³⁶ When 'Umar asked the question a second time, he understood and said, "(I am) a bringer of glad tidings." 'Umar asked, "Are you the envoy of Na'eem or of Sammâk ibn 'Ubayd?" He said, "The envoy of Na'eem." He said, "What is the news?" He said, "Glad tidings of conquest and victory." He told him the good news, and he praised Allah and ordered that the letter be read out to the people, and they praised Allah too.

Then Sammâk ibn Makhramah and Sammâk ibn 'Ubayd and Sammâk ibn Kharashah came with a delegation from Koofah, bringing the *khums* to 'Umar. He asked them about their lineage and all three of them told him. Then he said, "May Allah bless you. O' Allah, support Islam by them and support them by Islam."²³⁷

4.2. The conquest of ar-Rayy, 22 A.H.

Na'eem ibn Muqarrin appointed Yazeed ibn Qays al-Hamadhâni in his place, and set out with the army for ar-Rayy.²³⁸

²³⁴ Wâj ar-Ruwâdh: A place between Hamadhân and Qazween. [Author]

²³⁵ *Tarteef wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâya*, p. 160.

²³⁶ The man thought that 'Umar was asking him whether his name was Basheer. [Translator]

²³⁷ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/134.

²³⁸ Ar-Rayy: A well known city which is twenty-seven parasangs from Qazween.

There they met a huge group of the *mushrikeen* and fought with them at the foot of the mountain of ar-Rayy. The *kāfirs* resisted with great patience but were finally defeated, and Na'eem ibn Muqarrin killed a large number of them. They took a huge amount of booty from them, almost as much as the Muslims had taken at al-Madâ'in. Then Na'eem wrote to 'Umar, telling him of the conquest, and he sent the *khums* to him. Praise be to Allah.²³⁹

4.3. The conquest of Qoomees and Jurjân, 22 A.H.

When the good news of the conquest of ar-Rayy came, and the *khums* from that conquest arrived, 'Umar wrote to Na'eem ibn Muqarrin, telling him to send his brother, Suwayd ibn Muqarrin, to Qoomees.²⁴⁰ So Suwayd went there and he did not encounter any resistance, so he was able to take control peacefully. He camped there and wrote a peace treaty for its people, granting them security. When Suwayd camped in Qoomees, the people of various towns, including Jurjân²⁴¹, Ṭabaristân²⁴² and others, wrote to him asking for peace deals in return for paying the *jizyah*, so he made peace deals with all of them, writing a document for each town granting it peace and security.²⁴³

4.4. The conquest of Azerbaijan, 22 A.H.

When Na'eem ibn Muqarrin conquered Hamadhân for the second time then ar-Rayy, he sent Bukayr ibn 'Abdullâh ahead of

²³⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/136, 137.

²⁴⁰ Qoomees: Located at the end of the mountains of Ṭabaristân, between ar-Rayy and Nisapur.

²⁴¹ Jurjân: A large city between Ṭabaristân and Khorasan.

²⁴² Ṭabaristân: A large region which is mostly mountainous and is famous for producing scholars and literati.

²⁴³ *Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, p. 161.

him from Hamadhân to Azerbaijan, and he sent Sammâk ibn Kharashah after him. This was done on 'Umar's instructions, and this Sammâk was not the well-known *Ṣaḥâbi* Abu Dujânah. Bukayr and his companions were met by Asfandiyâdh ibn al-Farrukhzâdh before Sammâk joined him. They fought and Allah defeated the *mushrikeen*, and Bukayr took Asfandiyâdh captive. He said to him, "Is peace dearer to you, or war?" He said, "Peace." Then he said, "Keep me with you," so he kept him with him. Then he started to conquer Azerbaijan, city by city, and 'Utbah ibn Farqad was moving parallel to him on the other side of Azerbaijan, conquering it city by city. Then the letter of 'Umar came, telling Bukayr to go to al-Bâb. So he appointed Sammâk to take his place as the deputy of 'Utbah ibn Farqad. 'Umar put all of Azerbaijan under the control of 'Utbah ibn Farqad, and Bukayr handed Asfandiyâdh over to him. Bahram ibn Farrukhzâdh came to fight 'Utbah ibn Farqad, and 'Utbah defeated him and Bahrâm fled. When Asfandiyâdh heard of that he said, "Now there can be peace and no more war." So a peace treaty was made and peace returned to Azerbaijan, and 'Utbah and Bukayr wrote to 'Umar telling him the good news and they sent the *khums* to him. When 'Utbah became governor of Azerbaijan he wrote a peace treaty for its people.²⁴⁴

4.5. The conquest of al-Bâb, 22 A.H.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote a letter appointing Surâqah ibn 'Amr, who was known as Dhu an-Noor, as commander in charge of this campaign, and he set out with his army as instructed by 'Umar. When the vanguard of the army, 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah, reached the king who was there at al-Bâb, who was Shahrabarâz the king of Armenia, a descendant of the king who had killed the

²⁴⁴ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/141, 142.

Children of Israel and conquered Syria in ancient times, Shahrabārāz wrote to 'Abdur-Raḥmān asking him for protection. 'Abdur-Raḥmān granted him protection. The king came to 'Abdur-Raḥmān, seeking to give an impression that he was in favour of the Muslims and was sincere towards them. He said to him, "There is another man above me, go to him." He sent him to Surāqah ibn 'Amr, the commander of the army, and he asked Surāqah for protection, so Surāqah wrote a document to that effect. Then Surāqah sent Bukayr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Laythi, Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah, Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd and Salmān ibn Rabe'e'ah to the people of the mountains that surrounded Armenia, the mountains of al-Lān, Tafiilees and Mooqān. Bukayr conquered Mooqān, and wrote a peace treaty for them. During that time the Muslim commander of that region, Surāqah ibn 'Amr, died and was succeeded by 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Rabe'e'ah. When 'Umar heard of that he approved and told him to attack the Turks.²⁴⁵

4.6. The beginning of the campaign against the Turks

When 'Umar's letter reached 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Rabe'e'ah, ordering him to attack the Turks, he set out and passed al-Bāb, intending to do what 'Umar had commanded. Shahrabārāz asked him: "Where are you going?" He said, "I am looking for the king of the Turks, Balanjar." Shahrabārāz said to him, "Usually if we leave them alone and they leave us alone we will be happy." 'Abdur-Raḥmān said, "Allah sent to us a Messenger and promised us on his lips that we would be victorious and would continue to be so." So he fought the Turks and penetrated two hundred parasangs into the land of Balanjar, fighting many battles. Then huge and terrifying battles took place during the time of 'Uthmān (ﷺ).²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/145.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 5/142-147.

4.7. The campaign of Khorasan, 22 A.H.

Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays advised 'Umar that the Muslims should expand further in the Persian land and corner the Chosroes Yazdagird, because he was the one who was inciting the Persians and the troops to fight the Muslims. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb gave permission for that, based on al-Aḥnaf's advice. He appointed al-Aḥnaf as a commander and told him to attack Khorasan. Al-Aḥnaf set out with a huge army and headed for Khorasan, intending to make war on Yazdagird. He entered Khorasan and conquered Herat by force, appointing Ṣuḥār ibn Fulān al-'Abdi in charge of it, then he headed towards Marw Shahjān²⁴⁷, where Yazdagird was. Al-Aḥnaf sent Mutarrif ibn 'Abdullāh ibn as-Sakheer ahead of him to Nisapur²⁴⁸ and al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥassān to Sarkhas.²⁴⁹ When al-Aḥnaf approached Marw Shahjān, Yazdagird left the city and went to Marw Roodh.²⁵⁰ Al-Aḥnaf conquered Marw Shahjān and stayed there. When Yazdagird reached Marw Roodh, he wrote to Khāqān the king of the Turks, the king of aṣ-Ṣaghḍ and the king of China, asking them for help. Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays pursued him to Marw Roodh, leaving Ḥārithah ibn an-Nu'mān in charge of Marw Shahjān. Reinforcements from Koofah came to al-Aḥnaf with four commanders, and when Yazdagird heard of that, he went to Balkh.²⁵¹ They met up with him in Balkh, where Allah defeated him, and he and those who were left of his army fled across the river. Thus Khorasan came completely

²⁴⁷ Marw Shahjān: This is the greater city of Marw and was the capital of Khorasan.

²⁴⁸ Nisapur: A famous city of this region.

²⁴⁹ Sarkhas: A city halfway between Marw and Nisapur.

²⁵⁰ Marw Roodh: Located on a large river, but it was smaller than the other Marw.

²⁵¹ Balkh: One of the most beautiful cities of Khorasan, which is located near the Jayjoon river.

under the control of al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, who appointed a governor for each city, then he returned to Marw Roodh and wrote to 'Umar, telling him of the conquests that Allah had granted in the land of Khorasan. 'Umar wrote to al-Aḥnaf forbidding him to cross the river and saying: "Keep what you have gained control of in the land of Khorasan."

When the envoy of Yazdagird reached those whose help he was seeking, they did not care to help, but when Yazdagird crossed the river and entered their lands, then they had to help him because that was the custom of kings. Khâqân went with him to Balkh and then they camped at Marw Roodh, where al-Aḥnaf was. Al-Aḥnaf came out with the people of Baṣrah and Koofah who were with him, all twenty thousand of them, and he heard one man saying to another, "If the commander has any sense, he will stand at the foot of this mountain, putting it at his back, and with this river like a ditch in front of him, so that the enemy can only come from one direction." The following morning, al-Aḥnaf ordered his troops to take up that position, and this was a sign of victory and wisdom. The Turks and Persians came with a huge and alarming number of troops. Al-Aḥnaf stood up and addressed the people, saying: "You are few and your enemies are many, but do not be dismayed.

﴿How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave? And Allah is with aṣ-Ṣâbiroon [the patient]﴾ (Qur'an 2: 249)."

The Turks used to fight by day and al-Aḥnaf did not know where they went at night. So one night he went out with one of his scouts looking for Khâqân. When it was almost dawn, one of the Turkish horsemen came out, wearing a necklace and beating a drum. Al-Aḥnaf went up to him and they fought and stabbed one another, but al-Aḥnaf killed him. Then he took the Turk's necklace and stood in his place. Another one came out wearing a necklace and carrying a

drum. When he started to beat it, al-Aḥnaf approached him and killed him, taking his necklace and standing in his place. A third one came out and he killed him and took his necklace. Then al-Aḥnaf hastened to return to his army. None of the Turks knew anything at all about that. It was the Turks' custom not to come out until three of their mature men had gone out beating a drum, one after another. When the Turks came out they found their slain horsemen and the king Khâqân regarded this as a bad omen. He said to his troops: "We have been out too long and these men have been killed in a place where this has never happened to us before. There is nothing to be achieved by fighting these people; let us leave." So they went back to their country.²⁵²

The Muslims said to al-Aḥnaf: "What do you think about pursuing them?" He said, "Stay where you are and let them be." And al-Aḥnaf was right, for it says in the hadith, «"Leave the Turks alone so long as they leave you alone."»²⁵³

﴿And Allah drove back those who disbelieved in their rage: they gained no advantage [booty]. Allah sufficed for the believers in the fighting [by sending against the disbelievers a severe wind and troops of angels]. And Allah is Ever All-Strong, All-Mighty.﴾(Qur'an 33: 25)

Chosroes went back frustrated, having failed to achieve what he wanted or to gain the support he had hoped for. All those from whom he had hoped to get support abandoned him and disowned him when he needed them most.

﴿... And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him any way [of guidance].﴾ (Qur'an 4: 88)

²⁵² *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/159.

²⁵³ *Aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-Kabeer*. Shaykh al-Albâni said: It is *mawḍoo'* (fabricated). *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth ad-Ḍa'eefah*, no. 1747.

He was confused and did not know what to do or where to go. Then he sent word to the king of China, seeking his help. The king of China asked the messenger about the people who had conquered the land and subjugated the people, so the envoy told him about them, how they rode horses and camels, what they did and how they prayed. He sent a letter with him to Yazdagird saying, "The reason why I did not send you an army the front of which would be in Marw whilst the back was in China is not that I do not know what my duty is towards you; rather it is because these people whom your envoy described to me, if they picked a fight with the mountains they would crush them, and if I came to support you they would defeat me, if they are as your envoy described them to me. So try to make a peace deal with them." Chosroes and his family went and settled in some part of the land, humiliated and defeated, and he remained there until he was killed during the caliphate of 'Uthmān.²⁵⁴

When al-Aḥnaf arrived with a letter describing the victory and the booty that Allah had bestowed on them from the wealth of the Turks and those who were with them, and how they had killed many of them, and how Allah had driven back those who disbelieved in their rage, and they gained no advantage, 'Umar stood up on the *minbar* and the letter was read out before him, then 'Umar said: "Allah sent Muhammad with true guidance, and promised his followers reward in this world and in the Hereafter, and He (ﷻ) said,

«It is He Who has sent His Messenger [Muhammad] with guidance and the religion of truth [Islam], to make it superior over all religions even though the *Mushrikoon* [polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah] hate [it].» (*Qur'an* 9: 33)

Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise and granted victory to His troops. Allah has destroyed the kingdom of Persia and

²⁵⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/160.

scattered them, and they no longer control even a handspan of their land that could have any effect on a Muslim. Allah has granted their land, houses, wealth and people as an inheritance to you, to see what you will do. So adhere to His commands and He will fulfil His covenant with You. Do not change, lest He replace you with another people, for I fear that if anything bad happens to this ummah it will be because of you."²⁵⁵

4.8. The conquest of Iṣṭakhar, 23 A.H.

The Muslims conquered Iṣṭakhar for the second time in 23 A.H. Its people had broken the treaty after the troops of al-‘Ala’ ibn al-Ḥaḍrami had conquered it when they crossed the sea, coming from the land of al-Baḥrayn (Bahrain). They met the Persians in a place called Ṭāwus, then al-Hirbadhah made a treaty whereby in return for paying the *jizyah* they would receive protection. Then Shahrak broke the treaty and incited the Persians to do likewise. ‘Uthmān ibn Abi al-‘Āṣ sent his son and his brother al-Ḥakam to fight them, and Allah defeated the *mushrik* army, and al-Ḥakam ibn Abi al-‘Āṣ killed Shahrak.²⁵⁶

4.9. The conquest of Fasawdara Bajrud, 23 A.H.

Sāriyah ibn Zunaym headed for Fasawdara Bajrud, where he met a huge number of Persians and Kurds. The Muslims grew very anxious, and that night ‘Umar in his dream saw their battle and their numbers; the battle was taking place in the daytime and they were in a desert, and there was a mountain which, if they put it at their backs, the enemy could only attack them from one direction. The next day

²⁵⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/162, 163.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 5/166.

he gave the call, "*aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)," and when it was the hour that he had seen the fighting in his dream, he came out to the people, ascended the *minbar* and addressed the people, telling them of what he had seen. Then he said, "O' Sâriyah, the mountain!" Then he turned to them and said: "Allah has troops (angels) and perhaps some of them will convey it to them." And they did what 'Umar said, and Allah granted them victory over their enemies, and they conquered that land.²⁵⁷

4.10. The conquest of Karmân and Sajistan, 23 A.H.

Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy conquered Karmân in 23 A.H.²⁵⁸; it was also said that it was conquered by 'Abdullâh ibn Budayl ibn Warqa' al-Khuzâ'i.²⁵⁹ Some historians say that Sajistân was conquered by 'Āṣim ibn 'Amr, after intense fighting. Its fortresses were numerous and its cities were far apart, between the dam and the river of Balkh, and they used to fight the Qandahâr and the Turks.²⁶⁰

4.11. The conquest of Mukrân, 23 A.H.

In 23 A.H., Mukrân was conquered by al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr. Shihâb ibn al-Makhâriq brought reinforcements and he was joined by Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân. They fought with the king of as-Sind, and Allah defeated the armies of as-Sind and they captured a great deal of booty. Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr

²⁵⁷ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/168, 169. It was also narrated by al-Lâlkâ'i in *Sharḥ Uṣool I'tiqâd Ahl as-Sunnah*, no. 2537. Shaykh al-Albâni classed its isnad as *hasan* in his commentary on *Mishkât al-Maṣâbeeḥ*, 3/1678, hadith no. 5954. See: *Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 170.

²⁵⁸ *Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 171.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 171.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*.

sent a letter to 'Umar, telling him the news of the conquest. He sent the letter, along with the *khums*, with Şuḥâr al-'Abdi. When he came to 'Umar, he asked him about the land of Mukrân and he said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, its land is mountainous, its water is scarce, its dates are bad, the enemy is tough, its good is little and its evil is great. Much there is a little and a little is wasted, and what lies beyond it is even worse." 'Umar asked, "Are you trying to be a poet?" He said, "No, it is just information." 'Umar wrote to al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr, telling him not to go beyond Mukrân, and to stay on this side of the river.²⁶¹

4.12. The campaign against the Kurds

Ibn Jareer mentioned, with his isnad from Sayf from his Shaykhs, that some of the Kurds were joined by some of the Persians. They gathered and were met by Abu Moosa in a place in the land of Bayroodh that was near the Teera river.²⁶² Then Abu Moosa left for Isfahan, leaving ar-Rabee' ibn Ziyâd to fight them after the murder of his brother al-Muhâjir ibn Ziyâd. He took charge of the war and throttled them, and Allah defeated the enemy, to Him be praise. This is the way of Allah with His believing slaves, the followers of the best of His Messengers. Then the *khums* was taken from the booty and sent, with news of the victory, to 'Umar (ﷺ).²⁶³ Thus Iraq and Iran were conquered at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ). The Muslims established strongholds throughout these regions, expecting a backlash from the Persians in these lands. The conquest of the East was very difficult and demanded great sacrifices on the part of the Muslims, because of the differences in race. The inhabitants of Iran

²⁶¹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/172, 173, 174.

²⁶² Bayroodh and the Teera river are places near al-Ahwâz.

²⁶³ *Tahdheeb wa Tarteeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 172.

were Persians who has no ties of language, race or culture to the Arabs, and the national feelings of the Iranians were strong, fed by a lengthy history and deeply-rooted culture. Moreover the fighting was taking place in the Iranian heartland, and the Magian clergy played their part in inciting the inhabitants to resist. In addition to that, these regions were far away from the military centres of Baṣra and Koofah, and the land was mountainous which enabled the inhabitants to resist. Hence most of the cities broke their treaties and were re-conquered during the time of 'Umar or during the caliphate of 'Uthmān.²⁶⁴

5. The Most Important Lessons We Learn From the Conquests of Iraq and the East

5.1. The effect of verses and *aḥâdeeth* on the morale of the *Mujâhideen*

The verses and *aḥâdeeth* which speak of the virtue of jihad had an effect on the morale of the *Mujâhideen*. Allah states that every action of the *Mujâhideen* will be rewarded. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«It was not becoming of the people of Madeenah and the bedouins of the neighbourhood to remain behind Allah's Messenger [Muhammad, when fighting in Allah's Cause] and [it was not becoming of them] to prefer their own lives to his life. That is because they suffer neither thirst nor fatigue nor hunger in the Cause of Allah, nor they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers nor inflict any injury upon an enemy but is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allah wastes not the reward of the *Muḥsinoon*. Nor do they spend anything [in Allah's Cause] — small

²⁶⁴ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, Pp. 339, 340.

or great — nor cross a valley, but is written to their credit that Allah may recompense them with the best of what they used to do.﴾

(*Qur'an* 9: 120-121)

The early Muslims were certain that jihad is a successful transaction. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿O' you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad], and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know! [If you do so] He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in 'Adn [Eden] Paradise; that is indeed the great success. And also [He will give you] another [blessing] which you love, — help from Allah [against your enemies] and a near victory. And give glad tidings [O' Muhammad] to the believe.﴾

(*Qur'an* 61: 10-13)

They knew that jihad is better than taking care of *al-Masjid al-Harâm* and providing water to the pilgrims, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of *al-Masjid al-Harâm* [at Makkah] as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah? They are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the *Dhâlimoon* [polytheists and wrongdoers]. Those who believed [in the Oneness of Allah — Islamic Monotheism] and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives, are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him, and His being pleased [with them], and of Gardens [Paradise] for them wherein are everlasting delights. They will dwell therein forever. Verily, with Allah is a great reward.﴾

(*Qur'an* 9: 19-22)

They believed that *jihad* was a victory in all cases. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Say, 'Do you wait for us [anything] except one of the two best things [martyrdom or victory]; while we await for you either that Allah will afflict you with a punishment from Himself or at our hands. So wait, we too are waiting with you.'»
(*Qur'an* 9: 52)

And the life of the martyr does not come to an end; rather he is alive as Allah, the Exalted says:

«Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty and rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind [not yet martyred] that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.»

(*Qur'an* 3: 169-171)

They felt that the goal for which they were fighting was a sublime one. Allah says:

«Let those [believers] who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the Cause of Allah, and whoso fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward. And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is, 'Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.' Those who believe, fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of *Tāghoot* [Satan]. So fight you against the friends of *Shayṭān* [Satan]; ever feeble indeed is the plot of *Shayṭān* [Satan].»

(*Qur'an* 4: 74-76)

The Messenger (ﷺ) explained to the Muslims the virtue of jihad, and these *ahâdeeth* motivated them greatly. Among these *ahâdeeth* is that which was narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه), who said: «It was asked, "O' Messenger of Allah, which of the people is best?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "A believer who strives in jihad with himself and his wealth."»²⁶⁵ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) explained the degrees of the *Mujâhideen* when he said: «"In Paradise there are one hundred degrees which Allah has prepared for those who strive in jihad for the sake of Allah. The distance between two degrees is like that between heaven and earth. If you ask of Allah, ask Him for *al-Firdaws*, for it is the best part of Paradise and is the highest part of Paradise."»²⁶⁶

The Prophet (ﷺ) explained the virtue of the martyrs when he said: «"Allah has promised those who go out (in jihad) for His sake, (not going out for any reason except belief in Me and belief in My Messengers, but I will bring him back with the reward and booty that he has attained, or I will admit him to Paradise.) Were it not that it would be too hard for my ummah, I would not have stayed behind from any campaign. I wish that I could be killed for the sake of Allah then brought back to life, then killed then brought back to life, then killed."»²⁶⁷ And he (ﷺ) said: «"No one who enters Paradise would like to come back to this world and have everything in it, except for the martyr, who wishes that he could come back to this world and be killed ten times over, because of what he sees of the honour that Allah bestows upon him."»²⁶⁸

And there are other *ahâdeeth* which affected the first Muslims and those who followed the same path, based on these verses and

²⁶⁵ Bukhari, hadith no. 2786.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, hadith no. 2790.

²⁶⁷ Muslim, 3/1497.

²⁶⁸ Bukhari, hadith no. 2817.

aḥâdeeth. The senior *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) went out on campaigns even when they had grown old. The people felt sorry for them and urged them to stop fighting, because they were excused, but they responded by saying that *Soorah at-Tawbah* would not let them stop, and they feared that they might become hypocrites if they stayed behind and did not go out to fight.²⁶⁹

5.2. The fruits of jihad for the sake of Allah

The *Ṣaḥâbah* and *Tâbi'een* during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs believed that jihad for the sake of Allah was one of the necessities for the survival of the Muslim ummah. They undertook this obligation when conquering Iraq, the east, Syria, Egypt and North Africa. Their undertaking of this obligation bore many fruits, such as qualifying the Muslim ummah to lead mankind; putting an end to the power of the *kuffâr*, humiliating them and instilling fear in their hearts; and making manifest the truth of their call to mankind, which made the people enter into the religion of Allah in crowds. Thus the Muslims increased in pride and the *kuffâr* increased in humiliation. The Muslims united against their enemies and they brought to mankind the blessings of the light, justice and mercy of Islam.²⁷⁰

5.3. Laws of Allah that were manifested in the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands

By studying the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands, the researcher will notice some of the laws of Allah with regard to

²⁶⁹ *Al-Jihâd fee Sabeel-Allâh* by al-Qâdiri, 1/145.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 2/411-482.

societies, people and states. These laws include the following:

5.3.1. The law of causes

Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war [tanks, planes, missiles, artillery] to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly.﴾ (Qur'an 8: 60)

'Umar applied this verse during his reign, employing both physical and spiritual means as we have explained above.

5.3.2. The law of checking people by means of one another

Allah, the Almighty says:

﴿... And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the *Ālameen* [mankind, jinn and all that exists].﴾ (Qur'an 2: 251)

This law was fulfilled by the conquest movement in general. This law is one of the most important laws of Allah in creation, and is one of the most important laws that have to do with consolidating the position of the Muslim ummah. The early Muslims understood this law and acted upon it. They knew that the truth needs resolve and determination to support it, efforts to make it prevail, hearts to love it and emotions to be tied to it. It needs human effort, because this is the law of Allah in the life of this world and this is a consistent law.²⁷¹

²⁷¹ *Liqa' al-Mu'mineen* by 'Adnân an-Nahwâ, 2/117.

5.3.3. The law of testing

Allah, the All-High says:

«Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such [trials] as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, 'When [will come] the Help of Allah?' Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near!»

(*Qur'an* 2: 214)

Calamities and tests came during the conquest of Iraq, particularly in the battle of the bridge of Abu 'Ubayd, when thousands of Muslims were killed and their army was defeated. Then they regrouped and achieved great victories over the Persians. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves...»

(*Qur'an* 3: 186)

It may be noted that the way in which this verse states that the Muslim ummah will be tested is stated in the most emphatic manner.²⁷² This is the law of Allah with regard to faith and calling others to faith: there has to be some calamity, some harm to wealth and self, and it is essential to be patient and stand firm.²⁷³

5.3.4. The law of Allah concerning oppression and the oppressed

Allah, the All-Powerful says:

²⁷² *At-Takmeen li'l-Ummah al-Islâmiyah fee Daw' al-Qur'an al-Kareem*, p. 237.

²⁷³ *Tabṣeer al-Mu'mineen bi Fiqh an-Naṣr wa at-Tamkeen* by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, p. 456.

«That is some of the news of the [population of] towns which We relate unto you [O' Muhammad]; of them, some are [still] standing, and some have been [already] reaped. We wronged them not, but they wronged themselves. So their *âliha* [gods], other than Allah, whom they invoked, profited them naught when there came the Command of your Lord, nor did they add aught to them but destruction. Such is the Seizure of your Lord when He seizes the [population of] towns while they are doing wrong. Verily, His Seizure is painful [and] severe.»
 (Qur'an 11: 100-102)

The law of Allah is consistent: oppressing nations will be destroyed. The Persian state had oppressed and wronged its subjects, and had rebelled against the laws of Allah. So the law of Allah was applied to them and Allah caused the Muslims to gain power over them, and thus they were eliminated.²⁷⁴

5.3.5. The law of Allah concerning those who live a life of luxury

Allah, the Ever Watchful says:

«And when We decide to destroy a town [population], We [first] send a definite order [to obey Allah and be righteous] to those among them [or We (first) increase in number those of its population] who lead a life of luxury. Then, they transgress therein, and thus the word [of torment] is justified against it [them]. Then We destroy it with complete destruction.»
 (Qur'an 17: 16)

In the commentary on this verse it says: "When the time for its destruction draws nigh, We command those among them who live a life of luxury, their tyrants and their kings, to obey [Allah], then they

²⁷⁴ *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah fee al-Umam wa al-Jamâ'ât wa al-Afrâd*, Pp. 119-121.

transgress therein, thus deserving the punishment, so We destroy them. Allah singles out for mention those who live a life of luxury, although the command to obey is addressed to all the people, because they are the leaders of evil and the chiefs of misguidance; what others do of sin is due to their following these leaders and being encouraged by them, so it is more apt that the command be addressed to them.”²⁷⁵

This law came to pass concerning the leaders of the Persians.

5.3.6. The law of Allah concerning tyrants

Allah, the Exalted says:

﴿Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful [over them].﴾

(*Qur'an* 89: 14)

This verse is a warning to sinners in general; it was also said that it is a warning to the *kuffār*, or a warning to sinners and others.²⁷⁶ In *Tafseer al-Qurtubi* it says: i.e., Allah watches each person until He either rewards or punishes him.²⁷⁷ It is clear from these comments of the *mufasssireen* on the verses that we have quoted above that the law of Allah concerning tyrants is that He sends down the punishment upon them in this world. This is a consistent law which happened to the tyrants of the past and will happen to the tyrants of the present and the future. None of them will escape the punishment of Allah in this world, just as none of them will escape the punishment of Allah in the Hereafter.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ *Tafseer al-Aloosi*, 15/42.

²⁷⁶ *As-Sunan al-Ilāhiyah*, p. 193.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 193, quoting from *Tafseer al-Qurtubi*.

²⁷⁸ *As-Sunan al-Ilāhiyah*, p. 194.

The law of Allah concerning the tyrants and the punishment that Allah has sent down on them in this world offer lessons from which those who fear Allah and His punishment, and who know that the laws of Allah are consistent and are not biased towards anyone may benefit. Allah (ﷻ) says, describing those who understand His law concerning tyrants, and after mentioning the bad end that befell Pharaoh:

«So Allah, seized him with punishment for his last and first transgression. Verily, in this is an instructive admonition for whosoever fears Allah.» (Qur'an 79: 25, 26)

Thus the Persian tyrants were also subjected to the law of Allah.

5.3.7. The law of gradual progress

The conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands were subject to this law of gradual progress. The first stage took place during the time of Abu Bakr, when al-Ḥeerah was conquered under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed. The second stage began when Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi took over leadership of the army in Iraq, and lasted until the battle of al-Buwayb. The third stage started when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs was appointed in charge of the jihad in Iraq and lasted until just before the battle of Nahawand. The fourth stage started with the battle of Nahawand and the fifth stage was when the Muslims penetrated throughout the Persian lands. From the conquests the Muslims learned the importance of paying attention to the law of gradual progress when working to support the religion of Allah. The basis for the law is the idea that the road is long, so it is essential for those who are working in the field of Islamic *da'wah* to understand this law. The consolidation of Islamic rule in Iraq and the eastern lands did not happen overnight, rather it was subject to this law, by Allah's will.

5.3.8. The law of changing oneself

Allah, the All-Compassionate says:

﴿Verily, Allah will not change the condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves.﴾ (Qur'an 13: 11)

The *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them) began the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands by applying this divine principle with regard to the people who wanted to enter the religion of Allah. So they started to teach the people according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), instilling sound beliefs and ideas, and sublime characteristics, in their hearts.

5.3.9. The law of Allah concerning sins and evil deeds

Allah, the Almighty says:

﴿Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them. Yet, We destroyed them for their sins, and We created after them other generations.﴾ (Qur'an 6: 6)

Allah destroyed the Persians because of the sins that they had committed, the most serious of which were *kufṛ* and *shirk*. This verse speaks of an established truth and consistent law: sins destroy those who commit them, and Allah is the One Who destroys the sinners because of their sins.²⁷⁹ Allah enabled the Muslim ummah to gain power over the Persians when they (the Muslims) fulfilled the

²⁷⁹ *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah*, p. 210.

conditions required for victory and acted in accordance with the laws of Allah.

5.4. Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays changed the course of history

'Umar was adamant that the army should limit itself to the conquest of Persia and he forbade them to penetrate deeply to the east, especially after the defeat of al-Hormuzân and the Muslim conquest of al-Ahwâz.

'Umar said: "The area between the two rivers and al-Ahwâz is sufficient for the people of Baṣra. I wish that between us and the Persians there was a mountain of fire so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them." He said to the people of Koofah: "I wish that between them and the mountain there was a mountain of fire so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them."

'Umar discussed this matter with the delegation, and al-Aḥnaf said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I was told that you have forbidden us to go any deeper into the land, and you have ordered us to limit ourselves to that which is already in our hands. But the Persian king is still living amongst them and they will keep stirring up trouble for us so long as their king is still among them. No two kings ever meet until one of them expels the other. I think that we did not conquer any land except as a result of their aggression. Their king is the one who is inciting them and he will continue to do so until you give us permission to penetrate their entire country and remove him from his kingdom. Then the Persians will lose hope and will give up."²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/130.

'Umar said to al-Aḥnaf: "You are right, by Allah, and you have explained the matter to me as it is." So 'Umar gave them permission to penetrate throughout Persia. He came around to al-Aḥnaf's point of view and recognized its merit. So the Muslims penetrated deeply into that land. Al-Aḥnaf was appointed leader of the campaign in Khorasan, and other heroes among the *Mujāhideen* took charge of the campaign in other regions. 'Umar drew up the plan of war for them, and supplied them with reinforcements from the rear.²⁸¹

²⁸¹ *Ma'a ar-Ra'eel al-Awwal*, by Muḥibb ad-Deen al-Khaṭṭab, p. 146.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Conquests of Syria, Egypt and Libya

1. The Conquest of Syria

The first letter to reach Syria from the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb brought news of the death of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ﷺ) and the appointment of Abu ‘Ubaydah as governor of Syria. In this letter it said:

“Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, the successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), has died. Verily to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return. May the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣideeq, the one who acted in accordance with the truth, the enjoiner of good, the gentle, modest, quiet, easy going, friendly and wise. We seek reward with Allah for the calamity of his loss and the calamity that has befallen the Muslims. I ask Allah to protect us by means of piety and His mercy. May He help us to obey Him so long as we live and admit us to Paradise when we die, for He is able to do all things. We have heard that you are besieging Damascus. I have appointed you as commander of the Muslims. Send your raiding parties out towards Homs and Damascus and other parts of Syria, and plan that as you and the Muslims with you see fit. Do not interpret what I say as meaning that you should expose your troops to danger or give the enemy hopes of defeating you, rather send those whom you think you

do not need, and whoever you need with you for the siege, keep them with you. Let one of those whom you keep with you be Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, for you cannot do without him.”¹

When the letter arrived, Abu ‘Ubaydah called Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal and read the letter to him. The letter-carrier said: “O’ Abu ‘Ubaydah, ‘Umar says to you: “Tell me about Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyan and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ — how are they and how is their conduct? Are they being sincere towards the Muslims?” Abu ‘Ubaydah answered ‘Umar’s envoy and he and Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal wrote one letter to ‘Umar, in which they said: From Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh and Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb:

“Peace be upon you. We praise Allah besides Whom there is no other god. As far as we know, you take care of matters. Now, O’ ‘Umar, you have become in charge of the affairs of the ummah of Muhammad, the red and the black. There come to you enemies and friends, noble and ignoble, strong and weak, and every one of them has some right of justice over you. So think of how you will handle the matter, O’ ‘Umar. We remind you of a Day when all the secrets in people’s hearts will be revealed and all concealed matters will come to light, and all people will be subjugated to the Sovereign, the Subduer, Who will subdue them by His might; the people will submit themselves, awaiting His judgement, fearing His punishment and hoping for His mercy. We have heard that among this ummah there will be men who are outwardly brothers but inwardly enemies, and we seek refuge with Allah from that. Do not misunderstand our letter or take it in a way other than we intend it. Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah.”²

¹ *Tāreekh Dimashq*, 2/125.

² *Futooh ash-Shâm*, 99-102; *at-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 9/274.

Discussion between Khâlid and Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah be pleased with them both)

Khâlid came to know of the order to dismiss him from command. He went to Abu 'Ubaydah and said: "May Allah forgive you. The letter came from the caliph appointing you in command and you did not tell me; you prayed behind me when you are the one who is in charge." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "May Allah forgive you too. I did not want to tell you that until you had heard it from someone else. I did not want to interrupt your plan until you had completed it, then I would have told you. It is not power in this world that I seek and it is not for worldly gain that I strive. What you see will come to an end and cease to be. We are brothers, carrying out the command of Allah. If a man's brother is appointed over him, it will not harm his spiritual or worldly affairs, rather it is more likely that the one who is in charge is closer to *fitnah* and temptation or more likely to fall into sin, because of what he is exposed to, except those whom Allah protects, of whom there are few." Then Abu 'Ubaydah gave 'Umar's letter to Khâlid.³

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) replies to the letter of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh

When the letter of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh arrived via Shaddād ibn Aws ibn Thâbit, the nephew of Ḥassân ibn Thâbit al-Anṣârî, 'Umar responded to their letter, saying: "I praise Allah besides Whom there is no other god. I urge you to fear Allah, for that brings the good pleasure of your Lord and is the best that you can gain for yourselves; this is what smart people are eager to attain for themselves whilst helpless people are negligent. Your letter has reached me in which you say that as far as you know, I take care of

³ *Târeekh Dimashq*, 2/126.

matters. This is a kind of praise of me. You remind me that I have become in charge of the affairs of this ummah, and that noble and ignoble, enemies and friends, strong and weak, sit before me, and that each of them should have his rightful share of justice. You are asking me how I will handle that. There is no power and no strength except with Allah. You wrote to me telling me to fear a Day that is inevitable; the alternation of night and day wears out everything new and brings near everything that is far and brings about everything that is promised until they bring the Day of Resurrection, the Day on which all the secrets in people's hearts will be revealed and all concealed matters will come to light and all people will be subjugated to the Sovereign, the Subduer, Who will subdue them by His might; the people will submit themselves, awaiting His judgement, fearing His punishment and hoping for His mercy. You say that you have heard that in this ummah there will be men who are outwardly brothers but inwardly enemies. This is not the time for that; that will happen at the end of time, when there will be hope and fear, when people will hope and fear one another. Allah has appointed me in charge of your affairs, and I ask Allah to help me and to protect me from going astray just as He has protected others. I am a Muslim man and a weak slave, except when Allah helps me. The position to which I have been appointed will never change my character *insha' Allâh*. All greatness belongs to Allah and His slaves have nothing to do with it. Let no one among you say that 'Umar has changed since he was appointed caliph. I base my actions on which I see as truth, and I explain my position to you. If any man is in need or has been wronged, I shall restore his rights with no compromise. Your well-being is dear to me and if you get upset with me it will be hard for me to bear. I am responsible for that with which I have been entrusted and I will deal with any situation by myself *insha' Allâh* and not delegate it to anyone else. After that I will not seek help from anyone but those who are trustworthy, those among you who are sincere

towards the people. I will not entrust anything to anyone other than them *insha' Allāh*. As for worldly authority, everything that you see will come to an end. We are brothers, and any one of us may lead his brothers in prayer or may be in charge of him, and that will not affect his spiritual or worldly interests. Rather the one who is in a position of leadership is more likely to fall into temptation or sin, except those whom Allah protects, and they are few.”⁴

1.1. The conquest of Damascus

The conquests in Syria during the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) represent the second stage of conquests in this direction, after the conquests at the time of Abu Bakr. After the battle of Yarmook when the Byzantines were defeated, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ appointed Basheer ibn Ka'b al-Ḥimyari in charge of al-Yarmook. He heard that the defeated Byzantines were gathering in Fiḥl and that reinforcements had reached Damascus from Homs. He did not know whether to start with Damascus or Fiḥl which was in Jordan, so the commander Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ wrote to the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), asking for his orders. 'Umar wrote back: “Start with Damascus and head towards it, for it is the fortress of Syria and the seat of their kingdom. But distract the Byzantines in Fiḥl by sending cavalry to face them and the people of Palestine and Homs. If Allah causes us to conquer it before Damascus, that is what we want, but if its conquest is delayed until Allah enables us to conquer Damascus, then leave some troops to hold the city and take your troops to attack Fiḥl. Once it is conquered, then go with Khālid to Homs.”⁵

⁴ *Futooḥāt ash-Shām*, Pp. 99-102.

⁵ *Ad-Da'wah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Ahd Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 276; *Tahdheeb wa Tarteeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, p. 52.

From the commands of 'Umar we may note that he defined the responsibilities of his commanders according to the principle of economy of effort in addition to flexibility with regard to aims and goals. We may also conclude from these orders that the first main goal was Damascus, although a minor force was dispatched to Fihl. The second main goal was Fihl, as the whole army was sent to conquer it. The third main goal was Homs. In accordance with these instructions, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh sent fighting units to Fihl, led by Abu al-A'war as-Sulami, 'Âmir ibn Hâtmah, 'Amr ibn Kulayb, 'Abd 'Umar ibn Yazeed ibn 'Âmir, 'Ammârah ibn as-Şa'q ibn Ka'b, Şafiy ibn 'Aliyah ibn Shâmil, 'Umar ibn al-Ḥabeeb ibn 'Umar, Labdah ibn 'Âmir, Basheer ibn 'Aşmah, and 'Amârah ibn Mukhshin, who was the commander of these units, who headed towards Fihl.⁶

Abu 'Ubaydah set off towards Damascus, not encountering any significant resistance. The Byzantines relied on the local people in the regions near Damascus to block the advance of the Muslim forces, but they had no real enthusiasm for mounting such a defence, because of the bad treatment that they had received from the Byzantines, especially in the small villages.⁷

The Muslim forces reached the fertile oasis of Damascus (Ghooṭat dimashq) where the palaces and houses of the Byzantines were located, but they found them empty because their inhabitants had abandoned them and fled to Damascus proper. Heraclius sent reinforcements from Homs to Damascus, sending 500 fighters⁸, which was a smaller number than was required. The Muslim forces whom Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh had placed to the north of

⁶ *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arruḍiyah ad-Difâ'iyyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 182.

⁷ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah fee al-Futoohât al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. Qaṣiy 'Abdur-Ra'oof, p. 188.

⁸ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20; *al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, 188.

Damascus under the leadership of Dhu al-Kilâ' confronted them and a violent battle took place between the two sides, in which the Byzantines were defeated.⁹ The people of Damascus asked Heraclius for help, and he sent them a letter urging them to stand firm and to fight and resist, and promising them reinforcements. Thus their resolve was strengthened and they withstood the siege.¹⁰

1.1.1. The forces on both sides

The Byzantine forces

- ❖ Commander in chief: Heraclius
- ❖ Governor of Damascus: Nasîs ibn Bastorus
- ❖ Commander of the forces in Damascus: Bahân who had taken part in the battle of Yarmook and fled afterwards. His given name was Wardiyân
- ❖ The number of Byzantine troops in Damascus was 60,000, with the possibility of an additional 20,000 coming from Homs, and there were 40,000 fighters ready to intervene. The Byzantines stayed in Damascus, making use of its buildings, fortifications and walls, and they may have been expecting reinforcements to come and engage the Muslims from the outside
- ❖ The Byzantine forces in Fiḥl were composed of the city guard and the remnants of the army of al-Yarmook whose morale was very low because of their failure in the battle and their having fled therefrom. They were in a state of panic

The Muslim forces

- ❖ Commander in chief of the Islamic forces: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb

⁹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20.

¹⁰ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 188.

- ❖ Commander of operations in Syria: Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh
- ❖ The commander Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh sent ten of his generals, led by Abu al-A'war as-Sulami, with an appropriate number of Muslim troops — the sources do not say exactly how many there were — to take control of the road to Damascus as far as Beesân, which is known nowadays as Kharbat Fihl¹¹
- ❖ Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh sent other troops, under the leadership of 'Alqamah ibn Hakeem and Masrooq, each to a different place in the direction of Palestine, to secure lines of reinforcement from the west and the south¹²
- ❖ Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh sent a detachment under the leadership of Dhu al-Kilâ' to the north of Damascus, to keep a watch on the road that connected the city to Homs, so as to protect this side and prevent Byzantine reinforcements from reaching Damascus¹³
- ❖ The size of the Muslim forces after al-Yarmook was 40,000, who were highly organized and whose morale was very high after the victory at al-Yarmook¹⁴
- ❖ The size of the Muslim army that lay siege to Damascus was approximately 20,000. The rest of the troops were set to Fihl to guard the front there; when necessary they could be withdrawn from Fihl to support the siege¹⁵

¹¹ Op. cit., p. 189.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/258; *al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 189.

¹⁴ *Al-Yarmook wa Tahreer Diyâr ash-Shâm*, by Shâkir Mahmood Râmiz, p. 103.

¹⁵ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 189.

1.1.2. Description of the city of Damascus

Damascus was a great city that was named after its founder, Dimshāq ibn Kin‘ān. It came under Egyptian rule during the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is the oldest city in history and was a centre of idol worship. When Christianity came to the city, they turned its idolatrous temple into a church that was unsurpassed in beauty and splendour, except by the church of Antioch. To the north of Damascus lie the lands of al-Balqa’ and to the south al-Joolân (Golan), which is a mountainous region of arable and well-irrigated lands. Damascus was an important commercial centre inhabited by Arabs, and the Muslims knew it well because they used to trade with it. The city of Damascus was a fortified city, surrounded by strong walls built of stone six meters high and three meters wide, with strong gates. Heraclius had increased its fortifications after the Persians conquered it, enabling its gates to be closed firmly and surrounding the walls with a ditch three metres wide into which the waters of the Baradâ river were allowed to flow. Thus Damascus became a fortified citadel which could not easily be breached.¹⁶ This shows us that the Byzantine fortifications of Damascus were very strong. These fortifications indicate the following:

The fortifications of Damascus were not built in haste, because the city was of strategic importance. The Byzantines feared that they may lose it to the Persians, which meant that the efforts of Byzantine military engineers played a role in organizing these defences, utilizing engineering experience and resources that were not needed elsewhere, in addition to the engineering knowledge that was available to the Roman army in this field.

The Byzantine engineering genius manifested itself in the fortifications surrounding the city of Damascus, as the military

¹⁶ Op. cit., p. 180.

engineers took advantage of the topography in building these fortifications, especially utilizing the Baradâ river to fill the ditch surrounding the city, in addition to other ways of using the landscape to make it a natural barrier to block attacks coming from the north and north-east.

The Byzantine leaders placed a great deal of trust in the fortifications of the city, to such an extent that it made them gather their forces and take up a defensive position there, waiting for the Byzantine forces in Homs to regroup and engage the Muslim army. This means that these defences that had been built by the military engineers played a role in forcing the Byzantine commanders to take up this defensive stance, thus they had a direct impact on decision-making. It is very important to understand the importance of military engineering in battle.

On the other hand, these fortifications forced the Muslim army not to attempt to breach the city of Damascus, because they formed an obstacle. So the plan of the Muslim army was to impose a siege on the city.

The historical sources say that the siege of Damascus lasted for seventy days, and it was a harsh siege in which heavy weapons such as catapults and siege engines were used.¹⁷

1.1.3. The progress of the battle

Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh set out for Damascus, organizing his army in the following fashion:

- ❖ At the core: Khâlid ibn al-Waleed
- ❖ On the flanks: 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ and Abu 'Ubaydah

¹⁷ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, Pp. 190, 191.

- ❖ Cavalry: 'Iyād ibn Ghanam
- ❖ Infantry: Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah

Since the walls of Damascus had gates which were the only means of entering or exiting the city, the Muslims organized their besieging forces as follows:

- ❖ At the eastern gate: under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed
- ❖ At the gate of al-Jâbiyah: under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ
- ❖ At the gate of Tooma: under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ
- ❖ At the gate of al-Farâdees: under the leadership of Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah
- ❖ At the small gate (*al-bâb aṣ-ṣagheer*): under the leadership of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân

The Byzantines thought that the Muslims would not be able to keep up such a long siege, especially in winter, but the Muslims were men of deep faith and great patience who were able to withstand the changes in weather. The Muslim leaders let the Muslims take over abandoned churches and houses in the fertile oasis (*al-ghooṭah*) so that the *Mujâhideen* could relax, and they rotated their troops on a weekly basis, whereby troops at the gates would change places with troops in the rear so that the siege could continue no matter how long it took.¹⁸

But the Muslims did not stop there; they also continued to try to find out more about the enemy and the nature of the fortifications. Thus Khâlid ibn al-Waleed was able to choose sites to breach the fortifications and enter the city of Damascus. He chose the best place

¹⁸ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 192.

where there was a lot of water¹⁹ and made rope ladders that could be used by the troops to scale the walls. Khâlid ibn al-Waleed knew that a son had been born to the Patriarch of Damascus and that the people were gathered at the celebratory feast; the Byzantines were preoccupied with eating and drinking and were neglecting their duties, including the task of watching the front and the gates. When evening came, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and his troops set out, led by Khâlid, al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and Madh'oor ibn 'Adiyy. They said, "When you hear a *takbeer* at the walls, climb up to join us and head for the gate."²⁰

Khâlid and his first group crossed the moat in two floating vessels²¹ and reached the walls, then they threw up the rope ladders and when they were firmly attached, al-Qa'qâ' and Madh'oor climbed up, then they fixed more ropes. Then the second group came up and the first group went back down and went to the gate, where they joined the soldiers who were with Khâlid. They said the first *takbeer* at the top of the walls, then the second group scaled the walls and headed towards the gate, where they broke in with their swords. Thus the Muslim forces entered the city of Damascus.²²

Important lessons

Was the conquest achieved by means of a treaty or by force?

The scholars differ as to whether Damascus was conquered by means of a treaty or by force. Most of the scholars are of the view that the matter was settled by means of a peace deal, because they are not sure which came first: was it conquered by force and then the

¹⁹ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/259.

²⁰ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 192; *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20.

²¹ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, Pp. 192, 193.

²² *Ibid*, p. 192.

Byzantines agreed to a peace deal, or was one part conquered by means of a peace deal, then the other side was taken by force? Some suggested that half of it was conquered by means of a peace deal and the other half by force. This is more likely to be the case because what the *Ṣaḥābah* did in the case of the main church which was the largest place of worship, when they took half of it and left the other half.²³ And Allah knows best.

The date of the conquest

Ibn Katheer said: "The story narrated by Sayf ibn 'Umar suggests that the conquest of Damascus took place in 13 A.H., but Sayf also states the same as the majority, which is that it happened in the middle of Rajab 14 A.H."²⁴ Khaleefah ibn Khayyāt stated that Abu 'Ubadah besieged the Byzantines in Damascus in Rajab, Sha'bān, Ramaḍān and Shawwāl, then the peace treaty came in Dhu al-Qa'dah.²⁵ What matters is that the conquest took place after the battle of al-Yarmook.²⁶

Application of some principles of war

During the conquest of Damascus, the Muslims applied some of the principle of war, including surprise, initiating the fighting, making the most of opportunities and innovative thinking on the part of field commanders. We have seen what Khâlid ibn al-Waleed did when he sent out scouts and looked for the best place to breach the walls, and how that affected the situation and changed the siege into an attack. If we compare what Khâlid ibn al-Waleed did, using rope ladders to climb over the walls of Damascus, with what the Egyptian army did in the October War of 1973 C.E., when they crossed Israel's

²³ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bid'ayah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 56.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 55.

²⁵ *Târeekh Kkaleefah*, p. 126.

²⁶ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 193.

Bar-Lev line and used rope ladders to reach the enemy's defensive positions, we will realize that it was the same tactic. This demonstrates to us the brilliance of the Muslims during the Islamic conquests, and our modern battles are no more than an extension of this brilliance.²⁷

Conquest of other parts of Syria after Damascus

After the conquest of Damascus, Abu 'Ubaydah sent Khâlid ibn al-Waleed to al-Biqâ' (Bekâ)²⁸, which was conquered by the sword. And he sent out a party which met with the Byzantines in 'Ayn Misnoon. The Byzantines were led by a man called Sinân, who descended upon the Muslims from 'Aqabat Beirut. A number of Muslims were killed that day, so 'Ayn Misnoon became known as 'Ayn ash-Shuhada' (the spring of the martyrs). Abu 'Ubaydah appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân in charge of Damascus during his absence, and Yazeed sent Dihyah ibn Khaleefah to Tadmur with a detachment of troops to conquer it. He also sent Abu al-Zahra' al-Qushayri to al-Bathaniyah and Hawrân, where he made peace treaties with their people. Shurahbeel ibn Hasanah conquered all of Jordan by force, except Tabariyah (Tiberias) with whose people he made a peace treaty. Khâlid took over the land of al-Biqâ', and the people of Ba'labak (Bâlbek) asked him for a peace treaty, and he wrote a document for them.

1.2. The battle of Fihl

The troops whose job it was to attack the city of Fihl headed towards the south. When they drew near to the city, the Byzantine

²⁷ *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 195.

²⁸ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, Pp. 58, 59; see also *al-'Amaliyat at-Ta'arruḍiyah wa ad-Difâ'iyyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 185.

forces numbered nearly one hundred thousand, most of whom had come from Homs and were joined by troops from other cities that had been defeated in previous battles. When the Muslim troops who were to besiege Fihl under the leadership of 'Ammâr ibn Mukhshin reached the city, they were confronted by the Byzantines who dug ditches from Lake Tiberias and directed the water to the areas surrounding Fihl with the aim of blocking the Muslim army, especially the cavalry. This is a tactic that is used nowadays against armoured vehicles. Thus the Muslim cavalry was blocked, and the Byzantines turned this mud into a defensive line that protected Fihl even though it is located on a flat plain. If this plain had been dry, the Muslims would have been able to attack the city easily, for they were the most able of people in fighting desert battles. 'Amârah ibn Mukhshin stopped and ordered his troops to besiege Fihl instead of attacking it, due to the big difference in numbers between the forces and the difficulty of attacking, as well as the inability to cross the water barrier that the Byzantines had created. So the Muslims limited themselves to imposing a siege on the city of Fihl in which the Byzantines were barricaded, until Abu 'Ubaydah had completed the conquest of the capital Damascus and was able to bring his army to join the army of Abu al-A'war as-Sulami, whereupon Abu 'Ubaydah reorganized his troops in the following manner:

- ❖ The vanguard under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed
- ❖ The right flank under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh
- ❖ The left flank under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ
- ❖ The cavalry under the leadership of Dirâr ibn al-Azoor
- ❖ The infantry under the leadership of 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam
- ❖ General command of the troops went to Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah, because the site of the battle was in the area that was under his

command. Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah took command then he organized the troops and supply lines, and set out a plan to keep them in an ongoing state of readiness, prepared to face emergencies at any moment of day or night.²⁹

The Muslim siege of Fiḥl lasted for a long time, and the Byzantines thought that they would be able to take the Muslims by surprise and launch a decisive attack on them by night. The Byzantines, led by Saqlāb ibn Mikhrāq, attacked the Muslims who rose up against them as one, because they were in a constant state of complete readiness. The battle lasted until daybreak and then went on all day, until night fell. When it grew dark, the Byzantines fled and their leader was killed. The Muslims set out in pursuit and drove them in their defeat to that muddy area that they had prepared for the Muslims. For the attacking Byzantine army, chaos ensued, as the defeated troops fell into the water barrier that they themselves had made around Fiḥl. The Muslims pursued them and none of them escaped except a few. The Byzantine force that had been besieged was utterly destroyed, after which the Muslims continued with their original plan, according to which they sent Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah to Jordan and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ to Palestine.

Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed set off for Homs, and when they reached Marj ar-Room there was a bloody battle in which the plain was strewn with the bodies of the slain. During this battle, the Muslims managed to apply an important principle of warfare when the Byzantine vanguard engaged the Muslim vanguard. When Toodhra realized that the vanguard of his army had engaged the Muslim army, he turned around and headed towards Damascus. When the Muslims realized what was happening, they studied the situation and Abu ‘Ubaydah decided to send a force,

²⁹ *Al-‘Amaliyât at-Ta‘arrudiyah wa ad-Difâ‘iyah ‘inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 188.

under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, to chase Toodhra and attack him from behind, whilst Abu 'Ubaydah stayed where he was, fighting the Byzantine troops. At the same time, the Muslim scouts managed to find out the direction in which Toodhra was heading, so the troops of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân intercepted him. As soon as the fighting started between Toodhra and the troops of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed launched a surprise attack on the Byzantines from behind, and the forces of Toodhra were utterly destroyed.³⁰

1.3. The conquest of Baysân and Ṭabariyah

Abu 'Ubaydah and Khâlid, along with their troops, set off towards Homs as ordered by the caliph 'Umar, and Abu 'Ubaydah left Shurahbeel ibn Ḥasanah in charge of Jordan. Shurahbeel, accompanied by 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, went and lay siege to Baysân, where the people came out to fight him and he killed a large number of them, then they made a peace deal with him on the same terms as Damascus. He imposed the *jizyah* on them and the *kharâj* on their lands. Abu al-A'war as-Sulami did likewise with the people of Ṭabariyah.³¹

1.4. The battle of Homs, 15 A.H.

Abu 'Ubaydah continued pursuing the fleeing Byzantines as far as Homs, where he lay siege to the city. He was joined by Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and they intensified the siege, at a time of intense cold. The people of the city bore it patiently, hoping that the Muslims

³⁰ *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arrudiyyah wa ad-Difâ'iyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, 189.

³¹ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 61.

would go away because of the intense cold, but the *Ṣaḥābah* exhibited a great deal of patience. More than one commentator stated that among the Byzantines were those whose feet fell off in their leather boots, whilst the *Ṣaḥābah* wore nothing on their feet but sandals, but no harm came to their feet or their toes. Some of the elders of Homs suggested that they should make a peace deal, but the people refused, saying, our king is nearby. It is said that one day the *Ṣaḥābah* said a *takbeer* that shook the city, and there was an earthquake that cracked some of the walls. Then they said another *takbeer* and some of the houses collapsed. The common folk came to their leaders and said, "Do you not see what has befallen us and the situation we are in? Why don't you make a deal with these people on our behalf?" So they made a peace deal on the same terms as Damascus, on the basis that they would give (to the Muslims) half of the houses, and the *kharāj* would be paid on the land and the *jizyah* would be taken from individuals, according to their means. Abu 'Ubaydah sent the *khums* and the good news of the conquest to 'Umar with 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ood, and Abu 'Ubaydah stayed in Homs with a huge army, along with a number of leaders such as Bilāl and al-Miqdād. Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to 'Umar telling him that Heraclius had stopped the flow of water³² to al-Jazeerah, and that the water appeared sometimes and disappeared sometimes. 'Umar sent word to him telling him to stay where he was.³³

1.5. The battle of Qinnasreen 15 A.H.

Abu 'Ubaydah sent Khālīd ibn al-Waleed to Qinnasreen³⁴, and when he reached it, its people and the Christian Arabs who were with

³² i.e., he had blocked the Euphrates to prevent it reaching al-Jazeerah.

³³ *Tarteeb al-Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, p. 62.

³⁴ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/427.

them revolted against him. Khâlid fought them in an intense battle, and killed many of them. As for the Byzantines who were there, he utterly destroyed them and killed their leader Minâs. The Bedouin there apologized to him, saying that this fighting was not their idea; Khâlid accepted their apology and left them alone. Then he headed towards the city where they had barricaded themselves and Khâlid said to them: "Even if you were in the clouds, Allah would lift us up to you or bring you down to us." And he kept besieging them until Allah granted him victory. When 'Umar heard of what Khâlid had done in this battle, he said, "May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr, for he had more knowledge of men than me. By Allah, I am not dismissing him because of suspicion, rather I fear that the people will come to depend on him."³⁵

1.6. The battle of Caesarea 15 A.H.

During the same year, 'Umar appointed Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyan in charge of Caesarea³⁶, and wrote to him saying: "I have appointed you in charge of Caesarea; go there and seek the help of Allah against them, and say a great deal, *'Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh il-'Aliy il-'Adheem* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the Almighty.' Allah is our Lord, our trust, our hope and our Helper, and He is the best of helpers and the best of supporters." So he went there and besieged the city, and its people came out to fight on numerous occasions, the last of which was a battle in which they fought intensely and Mu'âwiyah strove hard against them, until Allah granted him victory over them. The fighting did not end until nearly eighty thousand of them had been killed, and the number was brought up to one hundred thousand with

³⁵ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 63.

³⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/431.

those who fled from the battle. Mu'âwiyah sent news of the victory and the *khums* to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ).³⁷

Dr. 'Abdur-Rahmân ash-Shujâ' thinks that the cities of Syria fell to the *Mujâhideen* one after another because the Byzantines were so low in morale that they never thought of resisting. So the cities of Beirut, Sidon, Nablus, Lod, Aleppo, and Antioch all fell. Caesarea was the last of the cities of Syria to be conquered at the hands of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân, and that took place after the conquest of Jerusalem.³⁸

1.7. The conquest of Jerusalem 16 A.H.

There was a Byzantine leader in charge of Palestine who was called the Arṭaboon, i.e., the senior commander who was second in command to the Emperor. This man was the craftiest and most brilliant of the Byzantines, with the deepest insight and the most treacherous nature. He had put a large number of troops in Ramlah and Aeelia' (Jerusalem)³⁹, and 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ wrote to 'Umar informing him of that and asking him for advice and instructions. 'Umar said his famous words: "We have sent against the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines the Arṭaboon of the Arabs. Let us see how things will work out."⁴⁰ And he meant it, for both leaders were the smartest among their people. The second battle of Ajnâdayn in 15 A.H., in which 'Amr defeated the Byzantines, paved the way to Palestine.⁴¹ The battle of Jerusalem began before the second battle of Ajnâdayn

³⁷ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, Pp. 63, 64.

³⁸ *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwa wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 355.

³⁹ *Huroob al-Quds fee at-Târeekh al-Islâmi wa al-'Arabi*, by Dr. Yaseen Suwayd, p. 35.

⁴⁰ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/431.

⁴¹ *Huroob al-Quds fee at-Târeekh al-Islâmi wa al-'Arabi*, p. 35.

when the Artāboon of the Byzantines sent a large number of troops to both Aeelia' and ar-Ramlah, as we stated above, in case of any attack by the Muslims under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ on these two cities, which were the most important cities in Palestine; ar-Ramlah was the capital of Palestine, and Aeelia' was its largest city and between the two there was a distance of eighteen miles.⁴² The Byzantines in Aeelia' were governed by the Artāboon himself, who had fled there with the remnants of his army after the defeat at Ajnādayn. Their governor in ar-Ramlah was at-Tadhāriq.⁴³ These are the most important stages in the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem:

1.7.1. Distracting the enemy

The plan of the caliph 'Umar was to distract the Byzantines from 'Amr in Palestine until victory was achieved against their troops in Ajnādayn, so that after that the Muslims could concentrate on conquering Jerusalem and the rest of Syria. He ordered Mu'āwiyah to go with his cavalry to Caesarea, to distract its garrison from 'Amr. 'Amr himself followed a plan that was similar to the caliph's plan. He sent 'Alqamah ibn Ḥakeem al-Firāsi and Masrooq ibn Fulān al-Makki at the head of a detachment to distract the Byzantine garrison in Aeelia'; they went to Aeelia' and distracted the troops there from 'Amr.⁴⁴ Then he sent Abu Ayyoob al-Māliki at the head of another detachment to distract the Byzantine garrison in ar-Ramlah. As soon as reinforcements reached 'Amr, he sent Muhammad ibn 'Amr with reinforcements to the troops who were confronting the garrison of Aeelia', and he sent 'Ammārah ibn 'Amr ibn Umayyah aḍ-Ḍumari with reinforcements to the troops who were confronting the garrison of ar-Ramlah. He himself stayed in Ajnādayn, awaiting the decisive

⁴² Op. cit., Pp. 35, 36.

⁴³ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/432.

⁴⁴ *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 36.

battle with Arṭaboon. In the meantime, the garrison of Aeelia' was trying to ward off the Muslims from the city walls, and the fighting intensified around the holy city, whilst the Muslims and Byzantines were mobilizing to fight in Ajnâdayn. The battle of Ajnâdayn was intense⁴⁵, and at-Ṭabari says concerning it: "They — the Muslims and the Byzantines — fought a battle that was as fierce as the battle of al-Yarmook, until many of them were killed."⁴⁶ It was a showdown between the Arṭaboon of the Arabs and the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines in Ajnâdayn. The Roman general was defeated and fled with his troops to seek protection within the walls of the holy city, and the Muslims gave them time to enter the city."⁴⁷ At-Ṭabari states that 'Alqamah, Masrooq, Muhammad ibn 'Amr and Abu Ayyoob all joined 'Amr in Ajnâdayn, and 'Amr marched with his entire army to Aeelia' to lay siege to it.⁴⁸

The Muslims gathered, under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, around Aeelia', and 'Amr lay siege to the city. The city was well fortified, and al-Wāqidi describes the walls of the city as being fortified with catapults, swords, shields, and chain mail. He states that the fighting began after a three-day siege, when the Muslims advanced towards the walls of the city and the garrison rained down arrows upon them, from which they protected themselves with their shields. The fighting lasted from morning until sunset, and continued in this manner for a number of days. Then on the eleventh day, Abu 'Ubaydah came to the Muslims, accompanied by Khâlîd and 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn Abi Bakr, and the Muslim cavalry and the champions of the people of *Tawḥeed*⁴⁹ which caused panic in the people of Aeelia'.

⁴⁵ Op. cit., p. 36.

⁴⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/433.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ *Huroob al-Quds*, p. 37.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 38.

The siege went on for four months, and there was no day on which fierce fighting did not take place. The Muslims bore the cold, snow and rain with patience⁵⁰, until the Byzantines despaired of resisting the Muslim siege of their city. The Patriarch Sophronius decided to stage a final attempt, and wrote a letter to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, the commander of the Muslim army, urging him to lift the siege because it was impossible for him to occupy the city.⁵¹

1.7.2. Surrender

The Byzantine Arṭaboōn wrote to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ saying: "You are my friend and my counterpart; your position among your people is like my position among my people. By Allah, you will not conquer any part of Palestine after Ajnādayn, so go back and do not be deceived, lest you be defeated like those who came before you."⁵² 'Amr wrote back to him, saying: "I am the one who is going to conquer this land." He sent the letter with a messenger and ordered him to tell him of the response of Arṭaboōn. When Arṭaboōn read the letter of 'Amr he laughed at what was written in it and said, "The one who is going to conquer *Bayt al-Maqdis* is a man called 'Umar." The messenger told 'Amr what he had heard from Arṭaboōn, and 'Amr knew that the man whom Arṭaboōn had mentioned was the caliph.⁵³ He wrote to the caliph telling him what al-Arṭaboōn had said, that no one would conquer the city but him, and asking him for advice, saying, "I am dealing with a very difficult situation and this land has been saved for you to deal with, so what do you think?"⁵⁴ After consulting others, the caliph set out for Syria with reinforcements,

⁵⁰ Op. cit., p. 38.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/433.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

after appointing 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib (ﷺ) in charge of Madeenah in his absence. He camped at al-Jābiyah, where the people of Aeelia' came to him and made a treaty with him on the basis that they would pay the *jizyah*, and they opened the city to him.⁵⁵

1.7.3. Different reports concerning who besieged Jerusalem and examination thereof

At-Ṭabari narrated more than one report concerning the siege of Jerusalem which say that the one who besieged it was 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ. Another report says that the reason why 'Umar came to Syria was that Abu 'Ubaydah was besieging Jerusalem and its people asked him to make a peace deal with them along the same lines as the peace deals with other cities of Syria, and that the one who drew up the treaty should be 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. So he wrote to 'Umar, telling him about that, and he came from Madeenah after appointing 'Ali in charge of it in his absence, bringing reinforcements for the troops in Syria.

Ibn al-Atheer narrated two reports that were very similar to the reports narrated by at-Ṭabari.⁵⁶ Al-Wāqidi attributed the siege of Jerusalem, including the consultation with the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) and the negotiation with the Byzantine garrison, to Abu 'Ubaydah. He states that Abu 'Ubaydah sent thirty-five thousand warriors to *Bayt al-Maqdis* under the leadership of seven commanders, each commander leading five thousand men. They were: Khālid ibn al-Waleed, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyān, Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah, al-Mirqāl ibn Hāshim ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, al-Musayyib ibn Najjyah al-Fazāri, Qays ibn Hubayrah al-Murādi and 'Urwah ibn al-Muhallal ibn Yazeed. He sent them on seven consecutive days, one commander

⁵⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/434.

⁵⁶ *Huroob al-Quds*, p. 40.

per day, then he joined them a few days after fighting broke out between them and the garrison of the city.⁵⁷ Al-Wāqidi went further than that and said that the people of Aeelia' came to Abu 'Ubaydah offering to let him enter the city peacefully, on condition that the treaty be done by the caliph of the Muslims, 'Umar, then he mentioned a report that is similar to the report narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari and Ibn al-Atheer, adding that Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to the caliph telling him what had happened. The caliph came to *Bayt al-Maqdis* and camped by the city walls, and the Patriarch came out to meet him, and said: "By Allah, this is the one whose description we find in our books, the one at whose hands our land will be conquered."⁵⁸ Then he went back to his people and told them, and they came rushing out, having suffered greatly during the siege, and opened the gate. They came out to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and asked him for a peace treaty and protection, and agreeing to pay the *jizyah* to him.⁵⁹ We regard this report of al-Wāqidi's as unlikely to be true, because we believe that whilst 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was besieging Jerusalem, his fellow Muslim commanders, after al-Yarmook, Damascus and Fiḥl, were travelling all over Syria, achieving victories. Abu 'Ubaydah, accompanied by Khālid ibn al-Waleed, conquered Homs, Ḥama, Qinnasreen and Aleppo, then he followed the coastal route south and took control of Antioch, Latakia and 'Arqah. Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyan seized control of the coastal route from Beirut to Sidon, and north from 'Asqallān to Tyre.⁶⁰ But al-Balādhuri notes in a report that 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ is the one who besieged Jerusalem after the conquest of Rafah, and that Abu 'Ubaydah came and joined him after conquering Qinnasreen and its environs, in 16 A.H. He was the one who besieged

⁵⁷ *Futooḥ ash-Shām*, 1/213-216.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 1/225.

⁵⁹ *Huroob al-Quds*, p. 40.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 41.

Aelia', and Aelia' is the city of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (i.e., Jerusalem).⁶¹ The people of Aelia' asked Abu 'Ubaydah for safety and a peace deal along the same lines as the peace deals with other cities of Syria, on condition that the peace deal with made with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb himself. Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to the caliph telling him of that, and 'Umar came and camped in al-Jābiyah, near Damascus, then travelled to Aelia', where he entered into a peace deal with its people. The conquest of Aelia' took place in 17 A.H. Al-Balādhuri then adds that there was another report concerning the conquest of Aelia'⁶², but we believe the first report which was narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari to be more likely. This report says that the siege of Jerusalem was carried out by 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, and not by Abu 'Ubaydah. We think that it is not unlikely that Abu 'Ubaydah joined the caliph 'Umar in al-Jābiyah for consultations concerning the conquest, seeing that he was the commander in chief of the Muslim armies in Syria, especially since we know that Abu 'Ubaydah was the second one, after Yazeed, to meet the caliph when he arrived in al-Jābiyah and summoned all the commanders of the troops in Syria⁶³ for a consultation. Abu 'Ubaydah was present, along with Yazeed, Shuraḥbeel and the senior Muslim commanders in Syria, and the treaty and guarantee of safety was drawn up, and the city was handed over.⁶⁴ But Abu 'Ubaydah did not witness this treaty as 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, Mu'āwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyān and Khālid ibn al-Waleed did, as is indicated by the text of the document itself, and we have no other explanation for that than the fact that Abu 'Ubaydah was not the commander of the army that besieged the city, rather the commander was 'Amr.⁶⁵

⁶¹ *Futoḥ al-Buldān*, 1/188-189.

⁶² *Ibid*, 1/189.

⁶³ *Tāreekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/431-436.

⁶⁴ *Huroob al-Quds*, p. 41.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 42.

1.7.4. The text of the document

There follows the text of the treaty as it was narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari:

“In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, This is what the servant of Allah, ‘Umar, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, has granted to the people of Aelia’ of security: He has granted them security for themselves, their possessions, their churches and crosses, their sick and healthy and all their co-religionists. Their churches shall not be taken for residence and shall not be demolished, nothing shall be damaged from them or from their surroundings, nor shall their crosses be removed or anything taken from their property. They shall not be harassed because of their religion, and none of them shall be harmed. No Jew will be allowed to live with them in Aelia’.

The people of Aelia’ will have to pay *Jizyah* as the inhabitants of other cities pay. They have to expel from Aelia’ the Byzantines and thieves. Those of them who leave shall have security for themselves and their belongings until they reach a place of safety, but anyone from among them who wants to stay in Aelia’ shall be safe provided they pay the *Jizyah* like the people of Aelia’.

If any of the people of Aelia’ want to leave with the Byzantines and take their belongings with them, they and their churches and crosses shall be safe until they reach a place of safety. Any of the people of the land who were in Aelia’ before the slaying of its last leader shall have the option of either staying, provided they pay the *jizyah* like the people of Aelia’ or if they so wish, they will be allowed to leave with the Byzantines or go back to their original homes. No *jizyah* will be collected from them until they are able to pay it.

The promise of Allah, may He be exalted, His Messenger (ﷺ), the *Khaleefah*, and the believers is therefore given to abide by the terms of this treaty as long as the people pay the *jizyah*.

Witnessed by: Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ, ‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn ‘Awf, and Mu‘âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân. Written in the year 15 A.H.”⁶⁶

Important lessons

The sacrificial attitude of Wâthilah ibn al-Asqa’ (ؓ)

Wâthilah said: “... I heard the squeaking of the gate of al-Jâbiyah, which was one of the gates of Damascus, so I waited, then I saw a huge cavalry. I waited for awhile, then I rushed at them, saying *takbeer*, and they thought that they were surrounded, so they fled back to the city, abandoning their leader. I ran him through and threw him from his nag, then I grabbed the reins of the nag and ran. They turned around and when they saw that I was alone, they followed me. I ran a horseman through with my spear and killed him, then another came close and I killed him too. Then I came to Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and told him, and there was a leader of the Byzantines with him, seeking safety for the people of Damascus.”⁶⁷

The mission of Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal to the Byzantines just before the battle of Fihl

After skirmishes between the Muslims and the Byzantines, just before the battle of Fihl, the Byzantines sent word to the Muslims asking them to send a man to them, “So that we may ask him what you want and are asking for and calling to, and we may tell him what we want.” So Abu ‘Ubaydah sent Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal al-Anṣârî to them as an envoy, to negotiate on behalf of the Muslims. The Byzantines prepared to welcome him, bringing out their most beautiful adornments and most lethal weapons. They spread the most

⁶⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/436.

⁶⁷ *Siyar A‘lâm an-Nubala’*, 3/386-387; *at-Tāreekh al-Islâmi*, 10/319.

costly and dazzling carpets and cushions on the ground, to distract Mu'adh from what he had come for, or to terrify and discourage him. But he surprised them with his disdain for their adornments and his refusal of all kinds of temptation, and with his humility and asceticism. Indeed, he took advantage of the situation and used it as a weapon against the Byzantines. He held on to the reins of his horse and refused to hand them to the Byzantine slave. He also refused to sit in the place that the Byzantines had prepared for him, saying, "I will not sit on these cushions that you enjoy at the expense of your weak ones." He sat on the ground and said, "I am one of the slaves of Allah and I sit on the ground of Allah. I will not enjoy anything of the wealth of Allah to the exclusion of my brothers."⁶⁸

A discussion took place between them, in which they asked him about Islam and he answered them. They asked him about the Prophet of Allah 'Eesa (ﷺ) and he recited to them the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, the likeness of 'Eesa [Jesus] before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then [He] said to him, 'Be!' — and he was.﴾ (Qur'an 3: 59)

He explained to them what the Muslims wanted from them, and he recited to them the verse:

﴿O' you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you...﴾ (Qur'an 9: 123)

They told him that the reason why the Muslims had been victorious over the Persians was the death of their king, (and said): "The king of the Byzantines is alive and his troops are innumerable." He said to them, "Your king is Heraclius but our King is Allah, and our commander is a man from among us. If he treats us in accordance

⁶⁸ *Al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 3/194.

with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of our Prophet, we will approve of him, but if he does otherwise, we will dismiss him. He does not isolate himself from us and he is not arrogant and does not act superior to us.”⁶⁹ As for their large numbers, he responded by reciting to them the verse:

﴿... How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave? And Allah is with *aş-Şábiroon* [the patient].﴾ (*Qur'an* 2: 249)

When the Byzantines failed to influence Mu'adh or undermine his confidence with the adornments and show that they had prepared, they came back to reality and offered him a peace deal, whereby they would give al-Balqâ' and its environs to the Muslims. Mu'adh informed them that he was not the Muslim leader, and that their options were either to become Muslim or to pay the *jizyah* or to fight. They got angry and said, "Go back to your companions, and we hope that soon we will capture you and put you in chains." Mu'adh said, "No way. By Allah you will have to kill us all, or we shall chase you out, humiliated." Then he went away.⁷⁰ During this mission, Mu'adh exhibited a military and political character, calling the people to Islam and refuting the arguments of his opponents, exposing their faults and their arrogant treatment of their own people, reminding them of the teachings of their own religion and calling them to Islam. As for their exaggerations and attempts at psychological warfare, he repelled them by referring to reality, with no exaggeration or scare-mongering. Then he went back to his leaders, who approved of everything that he had done and said to the Byzantines.⁷¹ The Muslims always called their opponents to Islam before the fighting began.

⁶⁹ *Al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 3/194.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Al-Anşâr fee al-'Aşr ar-Râshidi*, p. 207.

*The attitude of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit
during the conquest of Caesarea*

'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit was on the right flank of the Muslim army during the siege of Caesarea. He exhorted his troops and called on them to check on themselves and beware of sin. Then he led an attack in which many of the Byzantines were killed, but he did not manage to achieve his goal. He went back to the place from which he had set out and urged his companions to fight, expressing his astonishment that he had not managed to achieve the aims of this attack. He said: "O' people of Islam, I was one of the youngest of those who came to give the oath of allegiance, and I have been one of the longest-lived. Allah has decreed that I should remain alive until I fight this enemy with you... By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I have never launched an attack with a group of believers against a group of *mushrikeen* but they fled from us and Allah caused us to prevail. What is wrong with you that you attacked these people but did not cause them to flee?"⁷² Then he explained to them what he feared for them and said, "By Allah, I fear two things for you: that you may have stolen from the war booty, and that you may not have been sincere towards Allah when you attacked them."⁷³ He urged his companions to seek martyrdom sincerely, and told them that he would be in the forefront and would never return to his place, until Allah granted him victory or blessed him with martyrdom.⁷⁴ When the Muslims and Byzantines met, 'Ubâdah dismounted and started marching towards the enemy. When 'Umayr ibn Sa'd al-Anṣârî saw him, he called the Muslims and told them what their leader had done, and urged them to follow his example. Then they fought the

⁷² Op. cit, p. 209.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Byzantines until they defeated them and made them flee to their fortress.⁷⁵

*Umm Ḥakeem bint al-Ḥārith ibn Hishâm
in the battle of Marj aṣ-Ṣufr*

Umm Ḥakeem bint al-Ḥārith ibn Hishâm was married to 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl, who was killed during one of the battles of Syria.⁷⁶ She observed the *'iddah* of four months and ten days, then Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân proposed to her, but Khâlid ibn Sa'eed had sent word to her hinting at marriage. She got engaged to Khâlid ibn Sa'eed, and he married her. When the Muslims camped in Marj aṣ-Ṣufr — and Khâlid had been present at Ajnâdayn, Fihl and Marj aṣ-Ṣufr — he wanted to spend the wedding night with Umm Ḥakeem. She said, "Why don't you delay it until this battle is over?" but Khâlid said: "I have a feeling that I will be killed." She said, "It is up to you." So he spent the wedding night with her at the bridge in aṣ-Ṣufr, hence the bridge became known as the Bridge of Umm Ḥakeem. And he gave a wedding feast for her and invited his companions to come and eat. When they had finished eating, the Byzantines drew up ranks and Khâlid ibn Sa'eed went out for single combat and was killed. Umm Ḥakeem tied up her garments and went out, ready to fight, still with traces of perfume on her. They fought a fierce battle at the river, and both sides endured with patience, exchanging blows with their swords. On that day, Umm Ḥakeem killed seven men with the pole of the tent in which she had spent her wedding night with Khâlid.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Op. cit., p. 209.

⁷⁶ It was said that he was martyred at al-Yarmook, or at Ajnâdayn, or at Fihl.

⁷⁷ *Al-Istee'âb*, 4/486; *Dawr al-Mar'ah as-Siyâsi* by Asmâ' Muhammad, p. 313.

Caesar the king of the Byzantines bids farewell to Syria

In 15 A.H. (or it was said, in 16 A.H.⁷⁸ Heraclius retreated with his troops, leaving Syria and heading for Byzantium.⁷⁹ Every time Heraclius came on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and left it, he would say, "Farewell, O' Syria, I bid you farewell but I still have not had my fill of you and I shall return." But when he decided to flee from Syria and reached ar-Ruha⁸⁰, he asked its people to accompany him to Byzantium and they said, "If we stay here it will be better for you than if we go with you." So he left them and when he reached Shimshāt⁸¹, he climbed up onto high ground there, turned towards Jerusalem and said: "Farewell, O' Syria, after which we will never meet again."⁸² Then Heraclius went and settled in Constantinople. He asked one of his followers, who had been held captive by the Muslims, "Tell me about these people." He said, "I shall tell you so that it is as if you can see them. They are knights by day and monks by night. They do not take anything unlawfully, they do not enter a place except by giving the greeting of *salām*, and they destroy utterly anyone who fights them." Heraclius said, "If what you are telling me is true, then will take control of the land that is beneath my feet."⁸³

Allah has honoured you with Islam

When 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) came to Syria, riding on his donkey with his feet dangling on one side, Abu 'Ubaydah said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, now you are going to meet the leaders of the people."

⁷⁸ *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, p. 66.

⁷⁹ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/428.

⁸⁰ A city in al-Jazeerah between Moṣul and Syria.

⁸¹ A city on the banks of the Euphrates on the Armenian side, between Armenia and Syria.

⁸² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/429.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: “Allah has honoured you with Islam; to the extent that you seek honour elsewhere, you will be humiliated.”⁸⁴

His speech in al-Jābiyah when he arrived in Syria

‘Umar gave a speech in al-Jābiyah and said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood as I am standing now and said, ‘Be kind to my Companions, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then there will come people who will swear an oath before being asked to do so, and will give testimony before being asked to do so. Whoever among you would like to attain the centre of Paradise, let him adhere to the *jamā‘ah* (the main body of Muslims), for the *Shayṭān* is with one, but he is further away from two. No man is alone with a woman but the *Shayṭān* is the third one present. Whoever among you feels happy when he does a good deed and feels bad when he does a bad deed is a believer.’”⁸⁵

This world has changed us all except you, O’ Abu ‘Ubaydah

When ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) came to Syria, he said to Abu ‘Ubaydah (رضي الله عنه): “Let us go to your house.” He said, “What will you do at my house? All you will do is weep for me!” He entered the house and did not see anything. He said, “Where is your furniture? I do not see anything but a saddle, a plate and a waterskin, and you are the governor! Do you have any food?” Abu ‘Ubaydah went to a basket and took out some pieces of bread. ‘Umar wept and Abu ‘Ubaydah said to him, “I told you that you would weep for me, O’ *Ameer al-Mu‘mineen*. Whatever gets you to your destination is enough.” ‘Umar said, “This world has changed us all except you, O’ Abu ‘Ubaydah.”⁸⁶ Adh-Dhahabi commented on this incident, saying:

⁸⁴ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/590; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

⁸⁵ *Musnad Aḥmad*, *al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*, no. 177; a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith the men of whose isnad are *thiqāt*.

⁸⁶ *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, 1/17.

"This, by Allah, is true asceticism; it is not the asceticism of one who is utterly destitute."⁸⁷

According to a report narrated from Hishām ibn 'Urwah, his father said: " 'Umar came to Syria, and was met by the commanders of the troops and the leaders of the local people. 'Umar asked, "Where is my brother?" They said, "Who?" He said, "Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ." They said, "He is coming now." He came on a camel and greeted him with *salām*, then he said to the people, "Leave us alone." He walked with him until he came to his house, then he stayed with him, and he did not see anything in his house except his sword, shield and saddle."⁸⁸

Comments on the treaty with the people of Jerusalem

The treaty document which was drawn up by 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) bears true testimony to the fact that Islam is a religion of tolerance and not a religion of compulsion. It bears testimony that the Muslims treated the Christians in Jerusalem in a manner that had not even crossed their minds. 'Umar — who was the conqueror — could have imposed on them whatever he wanted and forced them to do whatever he wanted, but he did not do that, because he was representing Islam, and Islam does not force anyone to enter it, and it does not accept faith from anyone unless they believe voluntarily and in submission to Allah, for faith is not something that can be forced on people, because it is an action of the heart, and no one knows the innermost secrets of the heart except Allah, may He be glorified. A person may appear to you outwardly to be a believer when that is not the case, and such a person may cause more harm to the believers than those who outwardly show their disbelief and atheism. Hence the Muslims prefer to give people freedom of worship, and guarantee

⁸⁷ Op. cit., 1/17.

⁸⁸ *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 2/589, 590, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* as far as 'Urwah.

the safety of everything that is dear to them, so that they may live under the protection of the Muslims, paying the *jizyah* in return for that protection. In the shade of this peaceful and quiet life, living together under the protection and justice of the Muslims, the non-Muslims will see at close hand the beauty, tolerance, fairness and justice of Islam, and will see the truths that had been hidden from them because they were far away from it. At that point they will enter the religion of Allah in crowds, as happened in every land which was conquered by the Muslims, where they granted safety to the people.⁸⁹

‘Umar prays in al-Masjid al-Aqsa

Abu Salamah said: Abu Sinân told me that ‘Ubayd ibn Adam said: “I heard ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb say to Ka‘b, ‘Where do you think I should pray?’ He said, ‘If I were you, I would pray behind the Rock, then all of Jerusalem will be before you.’ ‘Umar said, ‘This is like the Jewish way. No, I will pray where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) prayed.’ So he went forward towards the *qiblah* and prayed. Then he came and spread his cloak and cleared away the garbage with his cloak, and the people did likewise.”⁹⁰

Ibn Taymiyah said: “*Al-Masjid al-Aqsa* is the name of the entire mosque. Some people have started to use the name *al-Aqsa* for the prayer-place which was built by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb at the front. Praying in this place that ‘Umar built is better than praying anywhere else in the rest of the mosque. When ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb conquered Jerusalem, there was a huge garbage dump on the rock, because the Christians used to deliberately treat it in a disrespectful manner, to annoy the Jews who used to pray in that direction. ‘Umar issued orders that the filth be removed, and said to Ka‘b, “Where do

⁸⁹ *Jawlah fee ‘Aṣr al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad Sayyid al-Wakeel, Pp. 200, 201.

⁹⁰ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/57, this isnad is jayyid.

you think we should build the prayer-place of the Muslims?" He said, "Behind the Rock." 'Umar said, "O' son of a Jewish woman, you are influenced by the Jews! Rather I shall build it at the front, for the front part of the mosque is ours."⁹¹

This is another example of the brilliant attitude of 'Umar, which proves in a practical way that Islam respects all the divinely-revealed religions and respects all the holy places, without exception. This Rock, from which 'Umar removed the dirt and filth with his own hands and carried it away in his cloak to cleanse it, was the *qiblah* (direction of prayer) of the Jews, and the Rock which was venerated by them because it was where God had spoken to Jacob — according to their beliefs. Similarly 'Umar adopted a brilliant attitude towards the Christians when he allowed them freedom of belief and guaranteed safety for their crosses and churches. He did not withhold this attitude from the Jews either, despite the crimes that they had committed against the Muslims, as he removed the dirt from the Rock and took care to show his respect towards it.⁹²

A Byzantine attempt to re-occupy Homs

The spies of Abu 'Ubaydah came to him and told him that the Byzantines had gathered and Heraclius had addressed them and sent them in his direction. Abu 'Ubaydah decided to tell this news from his troops, and he called the leaders of the Muslims, and the prominent and righteous among them, together to consult them and hear their opinions.⁹³ Mu'âdh ibn Jabal al-Anṣārī thought that they should not withdraw, and he said, "Are the Byzantines seeking to do to their enemy something more harmful than what you want to do to yourselves? Will you give to them a land that Allah enabled you to

⁹¹ *Majmoo'at ar-Rasâ'il al-Kubra*, 2/57, 58.

⁹² *Jawlah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, Pp. 203, 204.

⁹³ *At-Tareeq ila Dimashq*, Pp. 408, 409.

conquer where their heroes were killed and their troops defeated? By Allah, if you want to go back after having left it, you will find it very difficult." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "He has spoken sincerely and has spoken the truth, by Allah."⁹⁴ But events took a different turn, and the Muslims gave back to the people of Homs what they had collected from them. Abu 'Ubaydah ordered Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah, "Give back to the local people with whom we made a treaty what we took from them, for we should not take anything from them if we do not protect them." And he said to them, "We are bound by the same terms between us and you, and we will not retract anything so long as you do not do so. The only reason why we are returning your wealth to you is that we do not want to take your wealth when we cannot protect your land. We are simply moving to some other land and sending for our brothers to come to us, then we will face our enemy and fight. If Allah causes us to prevail, then we will fulfil our covenant with you, unless you change your minds." The next day, Abu 'Ubaydah ordered the Muslim army to march to Damascus, and Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah called the people from whom he had taken the *jizyah* and returned their wealth to them. He told them what Abu 'Ubaydah had said, and the people of Homs started saying, "May Allah bring you back to us, and may Allah curse the Byzantines who used to rule over us. By Allah, they would not have returned anything to us, rather they would have confiscated it and taken whatever they could of our wealth. Your rule and justice are dearer to us than the oppression that we used to suffer."⁹⁵

Abu 'Ubaydah sent Sufiyân ibn 'Awf to 'Umar on the night of the withdrawal from Homs to Damascus, saying, "Go to the caliph and give him my *salâm*, and tell him what you have seen and what the spies have told us, and what you know of the large numbers of the

⁹⁴ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 207.

⁹⁵ *At-Ṭareeq ila ash-Shâm*, Pp. 410, 411.

enemy, and what the Muslims have decided to do, namely withdraw." And he wrote a letter to send with him, in which he said: "My spies have come to me from the land of my enemy, from the town in which the king of the Byzantines was, and they told me that the Byzantines are heading towards us and have gathered against us in huge numbers that they never gathered against any army before us. I summoned the Muslims and told them the news, and I consulted with them. They agreed to withdraw from them until we heard your opinion. I am sending to you a man who has knowledge of what is happening here, so ask him whatever you want, for he is knowledgeable about that and he is trusted by us. We seek the help of Allah the Almighty and All-Knowing, He is sufficient for us and is the best disposer of affairs."⁹⁶

*The brilliant war plan drawn up by 'Umar (ﷺ)
to save Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ)*

When the news reached 'Umar, he wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) saying: "Send some troops with al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr, and send them straightaway, on the day when this letter reaches you, to Homs, for Abu 'Ubaydah is in danger." 'Umar had prepared a reserve cavalry in every region in the event of a sudden outbreak of war. In Koofah there were four thousand horses, with which Sa'd equipped the army that he sent to Syria. 'Umar also wrote to Sa'd, "Send Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy to al-Jazeerah with the troops, and let him go to ar-Raqqah, for the people of al-Jazeerah are the ones who incited the Byzantines against the people of Homs. And send 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân to Naṣeebeen, and let them clear Harrân and ar-Raha of the presence of any enemies. And send al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah with the Arabs of al-Jazeerah from (the tribes of) Rabee'ah and Tunookh. And send 'Iyâd, and when fighting breaks

⁹⁶ *At-Tareeq ila ash-Shâm*, p. 411; *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/23, 25.

out, let them all come under the command of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam."

Al-Qa'qâ' set out with four thousand men on the day the letter arrived, and headed towards Homs. 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam and the leaders of al-Jazeerah set out and headed towards the goals they were seeking. 'Umar set out from Madeenah to help Abu 'Ubaydah, heading towards Homs until he stopped in al-Jâbiyah. The people of al-Jazeerah who were participating in the siege of Homs with the Byzantines found out that the army had set out from Iraq, and they did not know whether they were heading for Homs or their own lands in al-Jazeerah, so they scattered, going back to their lands and their brethren, and they left the Byzantines facing the battle on their own. When Abu 'Ubaydah saw that the Byzantines' supporters from al-Jazeerah had let them down, he consulted Khâlid with a view to going out and fighting them, and Khâlid advised him to do that. So they went out and fought them, and Allah granted them victory. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr came with the people of Koofah three days after the battle, and 'Umar came to al-Jâbiyah, and they wrote to him, telling him of the victory and the arrival of reinforcements three days after the victory, and asking him about the ruling on dividing the booty. He wrote to them telling them: "Give them (the reinforcements) a share, for they were coming to help you, and your enemy scattered because of them."⁹⁷ And he said, "May Allah reward the people of Koofah with good, for they take care of their own land and they send reinforcements to other regions too."⁹⁸

If we study this brilliant war plan which was drawn up by 'Umar to confuse the enemy and scatter them, we will see the military genius of 'Umar. He ordered that a swift army be sent from Koofah to Homs to undertake the rescue mission, and he himself set out with an

⁹⁷ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/24, 25.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 5/25.

army from Madeenah. All of this appears to be something normal, but the amazing aspect is the fact that he ordered an army to be sent to the land of the enemy fighters, to force them to leave the battlefield and return to their land in order to defend it. This plan succeeded and they scattered and it then became easy for the Muslims to finish off the Byzantines.⁹⁹

The conquest of al-Jazeerah (Mesopotamia), 17 A.H.

We have stated above that the Byzantines and the people of al-Jazeerah attacked Homs and besieged Abu 'Ubaydah and the Muslims who were in the city. 'Umar sent word to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, ordering him to send an army from Koofah as reinforcements to the people of Homs, and to send an army to al-Jazeerah. Sa'd sent an army from Koofah under the leadership of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and he sent armies to al-Jazeerah, all of them under the leadership of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam (ؓ). These armies set out for al-Jazeerah. Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy followed the Euphrates route until he reached ar-Raqqah, where he lay siege to them, and they found themselves caught between two Muslim forces, in Iraq and Syria, so they made a peace deal with them. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân followed the Tigris route until he reached Naṣeebeen, where the people made a peace deal as the people of ar-Raqqah had done. When the people of ar-Raqqah and Naṣeebeen submitted, 'Iyâḍ got Suhayl and 'Abdullâh to join him, and took them all to Ḥarrân, conquering all the cities on the way. When they reached Ḥarrân, the people hastened to submit and agreed to pay the *jizyah*. Then he sent 'Abdullâh and Suhayl to ar-Ruha and make them agree to pay the *jizyah*. Thus all of al-Jazeerah was conquered by peaceful means, and it was the easiest of lands to conquer.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 11/137.

¹⁰⁰ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/26-30.

2. The Conquests of Egypt and Libya

The Muslims had strong motives for conquering Egypt. There was the faith which they wanted to spread everywhere, and Egypt was also connected to Palestine, so it was natural that after conquering Palestine, the Muslims would turn their attention to Egypt. The Muslims had split the Byzantine Empire into two parts which were connected only by sea, when they overtook Syria. In Egypt and North Africa there were Byzantine troops and outposts, and Byzantium had a powerful navy at sea, but the Muslims would not be able to feel secure in Syria whilst Egypt remained under Byzantine control. Egypt was rich land, the source of Constantinople's food supply. If the Muslims conquered it, that would greatly weaken the influence of Byzantium and the Muslims in Syria and the Hījāz would feel secure because otherwise it was too easy for the Byzantines to reach the Hījāz by way of Egypt.¹⁰¹

Another factor was that the Coptic Egyptians themselves were suffering from persecution at the hands of the Byzantines, who lived in Egypt only in fortified military outposts. Why not make the most of this opportunity, especially since news of the Muslims' justice had already reached Egypt?¹⁰² As for the Byzantine troops themselves, fear must have seized them¹⁰³ when they saw their king leaving Syria to become part of the Muslim state.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ understood all this, and reached the conclusion that the Byzantines in Egypt would be unable to withstand the Muslims, but if Egypt was left without being conquered, it would remain a potential threat to them. This is what

¹⁰¹ *ʿAsr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah* by al-ʿUmari, p. 348.

¹⁰² *Dirāsāt fee ʿAhd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 357.

¹⁰³ *Futooḥ ash-Shām* by al-Azdi, p. 118.

'Amr ibn al-Āṣ himself stated¹⁰⁴, despite the numerous reports which suggest that the first one to think of conquering Egypt was 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, or the caliph himself, with no input on the part of 'Amr, or that the caliph agreed under pressure from 'Amr.¹⁰⁵ Despite these differences, all the factors mentioned above prove that the plan to conquer Egypt was not merely a thought that crossed 'Amr's mind, of which the caliph did not approve, or that they did not have a complete picture of Egypt, the land and the size of the enemy forces there. Historical reports support what I have said. Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam stated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ after the conquest of Syria, telling him: "Urge the people to march with you to Egypt, and whoever wants to go with you, take him along."¹⁰⁶ It says in at-Ṭabari: " 'Umar stayed in Aelia' for a few days after he had made a peace treaty with its people and entered the city, then he sent 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ to Egypt and appointed him as its governor, if Allah enabled him to conquer it. He sent az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām after him with reinforcements. That is confirmed by the fact that the number of these reinforcements whom 'Umar sent to Egypt reached twelve thousand. He also ordered him to conquer Alexandria, and there is no dispute on this matter."¹⁰⁷

Would it have been possible for 'Amr to penetrate deeply into Egypt without the consent of the caliph? We know that the Muslims, whether commanders or soldiers, were extremely obedient and disciplined, hence we repeat that the conquest of Egypt could only have been part of a plan that had already been drawn up by the caliph and his commanders; it was not something that was done on the spur of the moment.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ *Dirāsāt fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 357.

¹⁰⁵ *An-Nujoom az-Zāhirah*, 1/4-7.

¹⁰⁶ *Futooh Miṣr*, p. 57.

¹⁰⁷ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/84-93.

¹⁰⁸ *Dirāsāt fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, Pp. 357, 358.

2.1. The Islamic Conquest of Egypt

The conquest of Egypt is regarded as the third stage in the conquests of the major regions of the Byzantine state. 'Amr's march from Palestine to Egypt ran parallel to the sea. He moved from Rafah to al-'Areesh to al-Farma (Pelusium), and his progress continued onward to Cairo and then Alexandria. This shows us the military talent of 'Amr, since he chose this route, perhaps because the Byzantines did not have a heavy military presence along this route as they did in Syria, or perhaps because this route was known to 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ. The sequence of conquests was in the order listed below.¹⁰⁹

2.1.1. The conquest of al-Farma (Pelusium)

'Amr headed west, and he did not encounter any Byzantine troops except in al-Farma. But before that the Egyptians had met him and welcomed him. The first place where fighting took place was in al-Farma where the Byzantines barricaded themselves in the city to face the Muslims, confident of their ability to defend the city and repel the Muslims. After they realized that the Muslims who had come with 'Amr were few in number and were less well equipped and were lacking in siege machines, 'Amr found out the number of Byzantine troops, their level of preparedness and that they were many times greater in numbers than his troops. He had two options for the conquest of al-Farma: either to attack and open the gates, or else be patient and wait until hunger forced the people to come out. The Muslims siege of the city intensified, and the stubbornness of the Byzantines increased. The siege lasted for several months, during

¹⁰⁹ 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi, by Dr. 'Abdur-Raḥeem Muhammad, p. 79.

which some of the Byzantine forces would come out to fight the Muslims from time to time, but the Muslims killed them all. 'Amr would encourage and exhort the Muslims with powerful words, such as when he said: "O' people of Islam and faith, O' bearers of the Qur'an, O' Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ)! Be patient like men and be steadfast; do not retreat. Sharpen your spears and protect yourselves with your shields, and remain quiet except for the remembrance of Allah. Do not do anything unless I tell you to."¹¹⁰

One day a group of Byzantines came out to fight a group of Muslims, and the Muslims defeated them. The Byzantines fled towards the city, followed by the Muslims, but the Muslims were faster than them, and they gained control of the gate before the Byzantines reached it. The first of the Muslims to enter the city was Asmeeqa', and it was an evident victory. It is worth mentioning that the Egyptian Copts who were in the city helped the Muslims and showed them the weak points. They welcomed the Muslims in Atmeedah. After al-Farma had been occupied, the Muslims destroyed its walls and fortifications so that it would not be of any use to the Byzantines if — Allah forbid — they returned to the city. Then 'Amr addressed his troops, saying: "O' people, praise be to Allah Who has granted victory to the Muslim army. Allah is Great, Who has honoured us by Islam. But beware of thinking that we have achieved everything we wanted, and do not let this victory make you complacent. There is still a difficult road ahead of us, and the mission with which the caliph has entrusted us is far from having been accomplished. You have to be patient and obey your leaders. The people here will know that we are the troops of peace, so we should not cause any mischief in the land, rather we should restore it and set a good example of the teachings of the Messenger (ﷺ)."¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ *Fatoh Misr* by Şubhî Nada, Pp. 19, 20.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 20.

‘Amr was confident that the city was no longer good to protect any army that might seek shelter therein. He checked on his army to see what he had lost during the battle, and he was saddened to learn that he had lost some men who had been eager to conquer Egypt, but they had died before achieving that. He feared that if the battles continued in this fashion, he would not be able to reach his goal. But Allah compensated him for those whom he had lost, and his army was joined by many men from the Arab tribes of Râshidah and Lakhm who lived in Jabal al-Ḥalâl.¹¹² ‘Amr and his army continued westwards, not encountering any resistance, until they arrived in al-Qawâṣir (al-Qaṣṣeen), from which he headed south until he reached Wâdi at-Ṭambalân, which is near at-Tell al-Kabeer. Then he continued southwards until he reached Balbees. The author of *an-Nujoom az-Zâhirah* said: “Then ‘Amr advanced, meeting with only a little resistance, until he came to Balbees.”¹¹³

2.1.2. The conquest of Balbees

At Balbees the Byzantines appeared with a large force, aiming to stop ‘Amr from heading towards the fortress of Babaliyon and seeking to engage the Muslims in fighting. ‘Amr (ﷺ) said to them: “Do not hasten to fight until we have discussed the matter. Let Abu Maryam and Abu Maryâm come to me.” At that point they refrained from fighting and the two men went out to meet him. He called them to become Muslim or pay the *jizyah*, and told them of the Prophet’s recommendation to treat the people of Egypt with kindness because of Hâjar, the mother of Ismâ‘eel. Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “You are going to conquer Egypt, which is a land where the *qirât*¹¹⁴ is used. When you conquer it, treat

¹¹² *Jawlah fee ‘Aṣr al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshideen*, p. 214.

¹¹³ *An-Nujoom az-Zâhirah*, 1/7, 8.

¹¹⁴ *Qirât*: The *qirât* is a measure of weight or volume which varies from one=

its people kindly, for they have rights and have ties of kinship — or ties through marriage.”»¹¹⁵ They said: “That is a distant relationship; no one would pay attention to it but the Prophets. Give us security until we come back.” ‘Amr said, “One like me cannot be deceived, but I will give you respite for three days.” They said, “Give us more,” so he gave them one extra day. They went back to al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt¹¹⁶, and Artaboon, the Byzantine governor, and told them about the Muslims. Artaboon refused and insisted on fighting; the Muslims defeated him and drove him and his troops back to Alexandria.¹¹⁷ It is worth mentioning something that is indicative of the Muslims’ noble attitude and chivalry. When Allah enabled the Muslims to conquer Balbees, they found therein the daughter of al-Muqawqis whose name was Armanoosah. She was close to her father, but she was visiting the city of Balbees with her servant Barbara in an attempt to escape marriage to Constantine the son of Heraclius, whom she did not want to marry. When some of the Muslim army managed to capture Armanoosah, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ gathered the *Ṣaḥābah* together and reminded them of the words of Allah (ﷻ):

«Is there any reward for good other than good?» (*Qur’an* 55: 60)

Then he said: “Al-Muqawqis sent a gift to our Prophet; I think we should return his daughter to him, and all of her servants and entourage whom we have captured, and their wealth that we seized.” They agreed to that.¹¹⁸ So ‘Amr sent her back to her father with honour, along with all her jewels and male and female slaves. Her servant Barbara said to her during the journey: “O’ my mistress, the

=era to another.

¹¹⁵ Muslim, *Kitāb Faḍā’il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 2543.

¹¹⁶ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/100.

¹¹⁷ *Fatoh Mısır*, p. 24.

¹¹⁸ *Ad-Dawr as-Siyāsi li’l-Ṣafwah fee Ṣadr al-Islam*, p. 431.

Arabs are surrounding us on all sides.” Armanoosah said, “I feel that my life and my honour are safe among the tents of the Arabs, but I do not feel safe in the palace of my father.”¹¹⁹ When she reached her father, he was very pleased with her and the way that the Muslims had treated her.¹²⁰

2.1.3. The battle of Umm Daneen

Ibn ‘Abdul-Ḥakam reported that ‘Amr went with his army and conquered Balbees after fighting that lasted for nearly one month. Then he went to Umm Daneen, which is also known as al-Muqassas; it is located on the Nile. The Muslims fought an intense battle around it, and ‘Amr sent word to the caliph asking for reinforcements. The caliph sent him four thousand men; in charge of every thousand was a man who was as effective as one thousand men. They were: az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwâm, al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad, ‘Ubâdah ibn as-Şâmit and Maslamah ibn Mukhallad; or it was said that the fourth one was Khârijah ibn Ḥudhâfah. ‘Umar said in his letter to him: “Remember that you have with you twelve thousand men, and twelve thousand will never be defeated for lack of numbers.”¹²¹ The Byzantines came out with the Egyptians to confront the Muslims, and a fierce battle broke out in which ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âş used his military genius as Khâlid ibn al-Waleed had done in the battles of Iraq. He divided his army into three groups, one of which was to lie in wait for the enemy in al-Jabal al-Aḥmar, another was to lie in wait by the Nile, near Umm Daneen, and the rest of the army was to face the enemy. When fighting between the two sides broke out, the troops who were lying in wait in al-Jabal al-Aḥmar emerged and attacked the

¹¹⁹ *Fatooḥ Mişr* by Şubḥi Nada, p. 24.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 24.

¹²¹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee ‘Aşr al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshideen*, p. 218.

Byzantines, who broke ranks and fled towards Umm Daneen, where they were met by the group that was lying in wait near the city. Thus they found themselves caught between the three divisions of the Muslim army; they were defeated and their army destroyed, and some of them fled to the fortress of Babaliyon.¹²² Thus the Muslims won this battle and Allah protected them from the evil of their enemies by His grace. That was due to the brilliance of their leader who drew up this brilliant plan which scattered the enemy forces.¹²³

2.1.4. The battle of the fortress of Babaliyon

'Amr and his army advanced towards the fortress of Babaliyon and besieged it. The siege lasted for seven months, during which time al-Muqawqis sent his envoys to 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ to negotiate with him. 'Amr responded by stipulating that he either become Muslim, pay the *jizyah* or fight. Al-Muqawqis chose to pay the *jizyah*, and wrote to Heraclius asking his permission to do so. But Heraclius did not accept that; he got angry, rebuked him severely and summoned him to Constantinople, then he banished him. When the conquest of the fortress of Babaliyon took too long, az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām said: "I am going to sacrifice myself for Allah, and I hope that Allah will grant victory to the Muslims thereby."¹²⁴ 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was besieging the fortress of Babaliyon, then they climbed up the walls of the fortress at night and fought violently with the soldiers. The first one to climb the fortress was az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām. He placed a ladder near the bird market (*souq al-ḥamām*) then climbed up. He told the Muslims to attack the fortress when they heard his *takbeer*. Soon az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām reached the top, and said *takbeer*,

¹²² Op. cit., p. 219.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ *Al-Futoohât al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. 'Abdul-'Azeez ash-Shanâwi, p. 91.

wielding his sword. He said *takbeer* and the Muslims outside the fortress responded. The people inside the fortress did not doubt that the Muslims had conquered their fortress, so they fled. Az-Zubayr led his companions to the gate of Babaliyon and opened it, and the Muslims rushed in and seized the fortress by force. But ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ made a treaty stipulating that the Byzantine troops bring out with them only the supplies that they needed for a few days; the fortress of Babaliyon and its stores and weapons would remain as booty for the Muslims. Then Abu ‘Abdullâh destroyed the towers and walls of the fortress.¹²⁵

2.2. The conquest of Alexandria

‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ and his troops stayed in the fortress of Babaliyon for several months, so that the troops could rest whilst awaiting permission from the caliph ‘Umar to proceed with the conquest of Alexandria. When permission came, ‘Amr left a strong Muslim force in the fortress, and set out with his troops from Babaliyon in May 641 C.E. (*Jumâda al-Âkhirah* 21 A.H.). He was accompanied by a number of Egyptian leaders who realized that their interests lay in supporting the victorious Muslim forces. They repaired the roads for them, and set up bridges and marketplaces. The Egyptians became their helpers in their aim to fight the Byzantines.¹²⁶ ‘Amr preferred to travel along the left hand side of the Nile, where the province of Buḥayrah is now, because the desert gave him plenty of room for his horses and troops, and enabled him to avoid the many streams that would have impeded his progress if he had travelled through the Nile delta. ‘Amr did not encounter any fighting except a little at Marfoṭ or aṭ-Ṭarânah, as the Arab

¹²⁵ Op. cit.

¹²⁶ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee ‘Aṣr al-Khulafa’ ar-Râshideen*, p. 224.

historians call it.¹²⁷ Then he crossed the river to the eastern side at the fortified city of Nuqyoos, because it contained a strong fortress and ʿAmr was afraid to leave it behind and move on. But instead of barricading themselves against the Muslims in their fortresses, the Byzantines used ships to fight the Muslims and prevent them from approaching their cities; they fired arrows at the Muslims to prevent them getting near the river, then they fled in their ships towards Alexandria. But those who stayed in the fortresses quickly surrendered to the Muslims and the Muslims entered them victorious. They spent a number of days in "mop up" operations against the enemy¹²⁸, and ʿAmr sent his commander Shareek ibn Sumayy to pursue the fleeing Byzantines. When he met them he had only a few soldiers with him, so the Byzantines' hopes were raised and they surrounded him. He sought protection from them in a hill that later became known as the hill of Shareek. He sent word to ʿAmr asking for reinforcements and as soon as the Byzantines realized that the reinforcements were on their way to the Muslims they fled.¹²⁹

At Sultays, six miles to the south of Damanhoor, the second encounter between ʿAmr and the Byzantines took place. There was a fierce battle in which they were defeated and fled.¹³⁰ It is most unfortunate that these battles, in which the Muslims fought with limited numbers against forces that were vastly superior to them in terms of both numbers and equipment, and which lasted for a number of days, get no more than a few lines or a few words from the Muslim historians, whereas they devoted dozens of pages to the battles of al-Qâdisiyah, Yarmook and Nahawand.¹³¹ One of these battles which

¹²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 224.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

our Arab sources did not cover properly was the battle of Kiryoon, which was the last of this chain of fortresses that stretched from Babaliyon to Alexandria. The Byzantine commander Theodore had barricaded himself there, and a fierce battle that lasted for more than ten days took place. In spite of that, Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam does not say more than these few words about it: "Then they met in Kiryoon, and fought there for more than ten days. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr was in the forefront and the flag-bearer that day was Wardân, the freed slave of 'Amr. 'Amr offered the fear prayer that day, then Allah granted victory to the Muslims. The Muslims killed a huge number of them, and chased them as far as Alexandria. There are reports of the heroic deeds of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr and Wardân, the freed slave of his father, during that battle."¹³²

At the time of the Muslim conquest, Alexandria was the capital of Egypt and the second city of the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople; it was also the foremost trading city in the world. The Byzantines understood the seriousness of a Muslim takeover of the city and were very concerned about that. Heraclius said: "If the Arabs seize Alexandria, that will signal the end of Byzantine rule."¹³³

The historical narrators claim that Heraclius prepared himself to go out to Alexandria himself to lead the fight against the Muslims, but when he had completed his preparations, Allah caused him to die, thus Allah sufficed the Muslims against him.¹³⁴ The Byzantine state was thrown into turmoil after the death of Heraclius, when he was succeeded by his two sons, Constantine and Heraclius II (Heraclianus). The empress Martina, the mother of Heraclianus, also

¹³² *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Ḥamdī Shaheen, p. 226.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, quoting from Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam.

played a part in ruling. Constantine died a mere hundred days after the death of his father, which caused fingers to be pointed at the empress, who wanted her son to be the sole ruler. A revolution broke out against her and the turmoil and civil war continued for several months, until Constanus the son of Constantine took control as the partner of his uncle Heraclianus.¹³⁵

In addition to its huge, strong walls and ample defences, Alexandria also enjoyed a unique defensive location. To the north it was protected by the sea, where the Byzantines held complete sway at that time. The lake of Maryoot protected it to the south, because crossing it was very difficult, if not impossible. At that time one of the branches of the Nile, which was known as Nazʿat ath-Thaʿwbân, encircled the city to the west. Thus there was only one route to the city, from the east, namely the road which connected it to Kiryoon.¹³⁶

The siege lasted for several months, which made ʿAmr fear that his troops may become tired or start to despair of ever defeating their enemy. So he decided to send his troops through the Delta area and the villages of Upper Egypt. The length of the Alexandria siege also caused the caliph ʿUmar to worry, and he started to entertain doubts about the soldiers' readiness to sacrifice themselves and their initiative. He thought that this might be because of some sins that they had committed.¹³⁷ He explained that in a letter to ʿAmr ibn al-ʿÂs in which he said: "I am very surprised at how long it is taking to conquer Egypt, as you have been fighting for the last two years, unless it is because of some sins that you have committed, or you have started to love this world as your enemy does. Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, only grants victory to people who are sincere. I

¹³⁵ Op. cit., p. 227.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 225.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 227.

am sending to you four individuals (meaning az-Zubayr and his companions), and I have told you that each one of them is equivalent to one thousand men as far as I know, unless something has changed them. When you receive this letter of mine, address the people and urge them to fight their enemy. Encourage them to be patient and to have the right intention. Give these four men the position of leadership. Tell the people that they should all attack as one under their leadership, and let that be at noon on Friday, for that is a time when divine mercy descends and it is a time when prayers are answered. Let the people beseech Allah and ask Him for victory over their enemies." When 'Amr received the letter, he gathered the people together and read it to them, then he called those four men and appointed them as leaders before the people. He ordered the people to purify themselves and pray two *rak'ahs*, then to turn to Allah and ask Him for victory. They did that and Allah granted them victory.¹³⁸

It was narrated that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ consulted Maslamah ibn Mukhallad al-Anṣārī and said: "Advise me about fighting these people." Maslamah said: "I think that you should choose a man who has knowledge and experience from among the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), and put him in charge of the people, then he should be the one to initiate and take care of the fighting." 'Amr asked, "Who should that be?" He said, "Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit." 'Amr summoned him, and when he came close he wanted to dismount from his horse, but 'Amr said to him, "I urge you not to dismount. Give me your spear." He handed it to him, and 'Amr took off his turban and tied it to the spear, and he appointed him as leader of the fight against the Byzantines. Allah granted him victory and Alexandria was conquered at his hands that same day.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Op. cit., p. 228.

¹³⁹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshideen*, p. 228.

According to one report: "I thought about this matter and I realized that no one could lead the Muslims to victory except those who had led them to victory during the early days," meaning the Anṣār. So he summoned 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit and appointed him as leader, and Allah granted victory at his hands.¹⁴⁰

Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam narrated that the siege of Alexandria lasted for nine months, and that it was conquered at the beginning of Muharram in 20 A.H.¹⁴¹, which coincides with 21 December 640 C.E., whereas Butler concludes in his study on the conquest of Egypt that the siege started at the end of June 640 C.E. and the city surrendered on 8 November 641 C.E., which corresponds with 7 *Dhu al-Hijjah* 21 A.H. This view may be more correct, especially when we refer to what is mentioned in the letter of 'Umar to 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ: "You have been fighting for the last two years." The time between 'Amr's arrival in al-'Areesh in December 639 C.E. and the surrender of Alexandria in November 641 C.E. is equivalent to two Hijri years.

'Amr did not harm the people of Alexandria; he did not kill them or take their women captive; rather he treated them as *ahl adh-dhimma*, like the people of Babaliyon. After things stabilized, he left some of his troops as guards in Alexandria and the rest of his troops fanned out to conquer the remaining Byzantine strongholds and pockets in Egypt. Thus was achieved the conquest of the Mediterranean coastline and its major cities such as Rasheed, Dimyât and others, and the Muslims seized full control of both the Delta region and upper Egypt.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 212.

¹⁴¹ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 229.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

2.3. The conquest of Barqah and Tripoli

After consolidating the conquest of Egypt, 'Amr set out to continue his conquests westwards, as the Byzantines had troops in Barqah and Tripoli and may thus have been tempted to attack the Muslims in Egypt if the opportunity arose. So he set off towards Barqah with his troops in 22 A.H. The road between Alexandria and Barqah at that time was filled with greenery and buildings, and he did not encounter any fighting along this route. When he reached Barqah he made a peace treaty with its people, stipulating that they would pay the *jizyah*. After the conquest of Barqah, its people used to send their *kharāj* to the governor of Egypt without anyone urging them to do so. They were the best of people in North Africa and did not cause any trouble.

Then after that 'Amr marched towards Tripoli, which was strongly fortified and held a large Byzantine force. They closed its gates and endured a siege which lasted for many months, during which the Muslims did not manage to achieve anything. The sea lay on the other side of the city, directly adjoining the houses; there was no wall between the city and the sea. Some of the Muslim troops became aware of this, so they snuck into the city from the seaward side and shouted *takbeer*. The Byzantines had no means of escape except their ships, so 'Amr also attacked with his troops, and none of them escaped except those who managed to get away in their ships. The Muslims seized booty in the city, and 'Amr sent his troops into its environs. 'Amr wanted to continue his conquests to the west and to continue on to Tunisia and the rest of North Africa, and he wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb about that, but the caliph was concerned about the Muslim troops going into new territory before consolidating their hold on the lands that they had conquered during their swift march from Syria to Tripoli. So he ordered the Muslim forces to stop at Tripoli. Thus the Islamic state expanded during the reign of 'Umar

ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) to include a vast area which stretched from the Jayhoon river and Sindh in the east to the deserts of North Africa in the west, and from the mountains of Asia Minor and Armenia in the north to the Arabian Sea and Nubia in the south. It was a single international state, multi-racial, multi-faith, multi-cultural; its people lived under the justice and mercy of Islam, which protected their rights and granted them a life of dignity, despite their differences in religion, culture and customs.¹⁴³

3. Important Lessons from the Conquest of Egypt

3.1. The mission of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit al-Anṣârî to al-Muqawqis

'Amr ibn al-Âṣ besieged the fortress of Babaliyon, and al-Muqawqis sent the following letter to 'Amr:

"You have penetrated our land and insisted on fighting us, and you have stayed in our land for too long. You are no more than a small group and the Byzantines have prepared themselves and are about to attack you; they have the equipment and weapons. This Nile is besieging you too, and you are prisoners in our hands. Send us some of your men so that we may listen to what they say. Perhaps we can resolve this conflict in a way that is pleasing to both us and you, and the fighting can stop before the Byzantines attack you, after which there will be no room for talk and you will regret it if things turn out differently than you had hoped. Send us some of your companions, so that we can reach a deal with which we are both pleased."

¹⁴³ *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Asr al-Khulafâ' ar-Râshideen*, p. 231.

When the envoys of al-Muqawqis came to 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, he detained them for two days and two nights, until al-Muqawqis feared for them and said to his companions: "Do you think that they have killed the envoys or detained them, and that they regard that as permissible in their faith?" But all that 'Amr sought to achieve by that was to demonstrate that the Muslims were not concerned about these proposals. Then 'Amr sent word back with the envoys: "There are only three option between me and you: either you enter Islam and you will be our brothers, with the same rights as us; if you refuse, then you must pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29); otherwise we will fight against you and be patient till Allah gives judgement. And He is the Best of judges (cf. Qur'an 10: 109).¹⁴⁴ When the envoys came back to al-Muqawqis he asked them: "How did you find them?" They said, "We have seen a people to whom death is dearer than life and humility is dearer to them than high status. Not one of them has any desire or love for this world; rather they sit on the ground and eat on their knees. Their leader is like one of them and those of high status cannot be distinguished from the lowly nor the master from the slave. When the time for prayer comes, not one of them stays behind. They wash their limbs with water and stand with humility in their prayer."

At that, al-Muqawqis said: "By the One Who may be sworn by, if these people wanted to take on the mountains they would destroy them. No one has the capability to fight them. If we do not take the opportunity to make a deal with them today whilst they are surrounded by this Nile, they will not respond to us after today when they manage to move out of the position where they are now." Al-Muqawqis sent his envoys back to them and said: "Send some of your envoys to us so that we may talk to them and negotiate a deal

¹⁴⁴ 'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit *Ṣaḥābi Kabeer wa Fātiḥ Mujāhid*, p. 91.

that will be good for us and for you.” ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ sent ten men, one of whom was ‘Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit. ‘Amr ordered him to be the one to speak to the people, and not to accept any deal but one of these three options¹⁴⁵, because the caliph had issued instructions to that effect. ‘Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit was black, and when they travelled by boat to al-Muqawqis and entered his place, ‘Ubâdah stepped forward and al-Muqawqis was alarmed because of his blackness. He said, “Take this black man away from me and let someone else come and speak to me!” They said, “This black man is the best of us in knowledge and wisdom. He is our leader and the best of us, and has been appointed over us. We all refer to his opinion, and our leader has appointed him over us and ordered us not to go against him.” Al-Muqawqis said to the delegation, “How could you accept this black man as the best among you? Rather he should be the least among you.” They said, “No; even though he is black as you can see, he is the best in status among us, one of the foremost among us and one of the wisest. Blackness is not something bad among us.” Al-Muqawqis said to ‘Ubâdah, “Come forward, O’ black man, and speak to me gently, for your blackness alarms me, and if you speak harshly that will alarm me further.” ‘Ubâdah went forward and said, “I have heard what you said. Among my companions whom I left behind are a thousand men who are all as black as me, and even blacker than me and more terrifying to behold. If you saw them you would be even more alarmed. My youth is gone, but nevertheless I would not be scared if one hundred men of my enemy wanted to face me all at once, and the same is true of my companions, for our hope and our desire is to strive in jihad for the sake of Allah, seeking the pleasure of Allah. The reason for our campaign against our enemies who wage war against Allah is not the hope of worldly gains or the

¹⁴⁵ The options were, as stated above: becoming Muslim, paying the *jizyah* or fighting.

accumulation of wealth; rather Allah has permitted that to us and made the booty we acquire permissible for us. But none of us cares whether he has a *qintâr* of gold or has nothing but a *dirham*, because all we want from this world is something to eat and ward off hunger, and a cloth to wrap around ourselves. If one of us owns nothing more than that, that is enough. If he gets a *qintâr* of gold he will spend it for the sake of Allah and be content with the little that is left in his hand, because the pleasure of this world is not true pleasure and its luxury is not true luxury; rather real pleasure and luxury come in the Hereafter. This is how our Lord has guided us and our Prophet has taught us; he advised us that our ambition in this world should be just to have enough to ward off hunger and cover our *'awrahs*; our main concern should be to please our Lord and strive in jihad against His enemies."

When al-Muqawqis heard that, he said to those who were around him: "Have you ever heard anything like what this man is saying? His appearance alarmed me but his words alarm me more than his appearance. Allah has sent this man and his companions out to destroy the world! I think that they are bound to prevail over the entire world."

Then al-Muqawqis turned to 'Ubâdah and said: "O' man, I have heard what you say about yourself and your companions. Indeed you have not achieved what you have achieved except because of what you have mentioned, and you have only prevailed over those over whom you have prevailed because of their love for this world. An innumerable Byzantine force has come to us to fight you, people who are known for their courage and toughness; none of them cares whom he is going to meet and fight. We know that you will not be able to tackle them, because you are weak and small in number. You have been in our land for many months, and you are suffering from hardship and lack of provisions. We feel sorry for you because of your weakness, low numbers and lack of resources, and

we will be happy to help you by giving each man among you two *dinārs*; we will also give your leader one hundred *dinārs* and your caliph one thousand. Take it and go back to your own land before there comes to you a force that you cannot deal with."

'Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) said: "Do not deceive yourself or your companions. You are trying to scare us by telling us about this Byzantine force and its great numbers, and telling us that we cannot tackle them. But this is not something that you can scare us with, and it is not something that will make us change our plans. If what you say is true, then by Allah, that is the most encouraging reason to fight them, and will make us more keen to do so, because that will be more pleasing to our Lord. If we are all killed, that will enable us to earn His good pleasure and attain Paradise, and there is nothing dearer to us than that. The outcome will be good in either case. Either we will make great gains in this world, if we defeat you, or we will make great gains in the Hereafter, if you defeat us, and gains in the Hereafter are dearer to us, and that is what we are striving for. Allah says to us in His Book:

﴿How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave?
And Allah is with aṣ-Ṣābiroon [the patient].﴾ (Qur'an 2: 249)

There is no man among us who does not pray morning and evening for Allah to bless him with martyrdom and not to send him back to his wife and child. There is no one among us who worries about that which he has left behind. Each one of us has entrusted those whom he has left behind, wife and children, to his Lord. All our concern is focused on what lies before us. As for your saying that we are enduring hardship and have little provision, we are having an easy time of it. If the whole world was ours, we would not want for ourselves any more than what we have now. Think about what you want to do and tell us, for there is no deal between us and we will not

accept anything from you but one of these three options. Choose whichever one you want and do not indulge in wishful thinking. This is what my commander has told me to do, and this is what the caliph has commanded him to do, and this is the advice that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave to us before. Either respond to Islam, which is the only religion that Allah will accept, and it is the religion of His Prophets, Messengers and angels, and Allah has commanded us to fight those who oppose it and turn away from it until they enter it; whoever does that will have the same rights and duties as we do and he will be our brother in the religion of Allah. If you and your companions accept that, then you will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter, and we will refrain from fighting you and will not harm you. If you refuse, then you must pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29), and we will agree on the amount of *jizyah* to be paid on an annual basis, and we will fight on your behalf anyone who attacks you or attacks any of your land, persons or wealth. We will do that for you if you are under our protection, and that will be a covenant that is binding upon us before Allah. If you refuse, then there will be no option than to let the sword decide between us and you, until we all die or we attain what we want from you. This is our promise before Allah, and there is no other option for us except this. Choose for yourselves."

Al-Muqawqis said: "This will never be possible. All that you want is to enslave us as long as the earth remains." 'Ubâdah said to him, "It is up to you; choose what you want." Al-Muqawqis asked, "Why can we not have an option other than these three?" 'Ubâdah raised his hands and said, "No, by the Lord of heaven, by the Lord of earth and the Lord of all things. You can have no other deal with us, so choose for yourself."

Al-Muqawqis turned to his companions and asked: "Have you decided what you want?" They said, "Would anyone accept this

humiliation? As for their wanting us to enter their religion, that can never happen. We will not leave the religion of the Messiah, son of Mary and enter into a religion that we do not know. As for their wanting to imprison us and make us slaves forever, death is better than that. If they accept for us to give them many times more than what we have given them, that would be better." Al-Muqawqis said to 'Ubâdah, "The people have refused. What do you think? Go back to your leader and tell him that we will give you many more times what you are hoping for, and go away."

'Ubâdah and his companions left, and al-Muqawqis said to those who were around him: "Obey me, and let the people accept one of these three options, for by Allah you have no power to resist them, and if you do not respond to them willingly you will make a worse deal with them unwillingly." They asked him, "Which option should we choose?" He said, "I shall tell you. As for entering another religion, I would not tell you to do that. As for fighting them, I know that you will never be able to prevail over them, and you will never persevere as they do. So there is nothing left but the third option." They said, "So we will be enslaved to them forever?" He said, "Yes, being slaves, but with full authority in your land, knowing that you, your wealth and your children are safe, is better than all of you dying, and being slaves, sold and scattered throughout the land and enslaved forever, you and your families and children." They said, "Death is preferable to that."¹⁴⁶

From this dialogue that took place between 'Ubâdah and al-Muqawqis, we can see the smartness of 'Ubâdah and his understanding of what his opponent was aiming at, and he was not influenced by these methods that he used to try to affect the outcome. During this discussion, 'Ubâdah did not forget to call al-Muqawqis to

¹⁴⁶ *An-Nujoom az-Zâhirah, Mulook Miṣr wa al-Qâhirah*, 1/10-16.

Islam and encourage him to enter the faith, and to demonstrate the openness of the Muslims towards other nations and religions, which had a good impact on al-Muqawqis, who chose to make a peace deal with the Muslims.¹⁴⁷

3.2. Some tactics of war during the conquest of Egypt

‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ practised many of the tactics of war during the conquest of Egypt, such as the following:

3.2.1. Psychological warfare

When al-Muqawqis commanded the women to stand on the walls of Babaliyon, facing inwards, and he made the armed men stand facing towards the Muslims to terrify them, ‘Amr sent word to him saying: “We have seen what you have done, but it is not by our numbers that we have defeated our enemies. We met your king (emperor) and you know what happened to him.” Al-Muqawqis said to his companions: “These people are speaking the truth. They expelled our king from his kingdom and drove him back to Constantinople. We should submit.”¹⁴⁸ ‘Amr was one of the leaders who used psychological warfare to terrify the enemy and reduce their fighting spirit. In wartime he relied first on Allah, then on his smartness and military skills to achieve a single goal, which was a decisive victory at the end of the battle.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ *Al-Anṣâr fee al-‘Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 211.

¹⁴⁸ *Al-Ḥarb an-Nafsiyah* by Dr. Aḥmad Nawfal, p. 174.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

3.2.2. Ambushes and surprise attacks

'Amr also used the methods of ambush and surprise attacks in the battle of 'Ayn Shams. He made solid preparations which made it easy to achieve complete success. He sent ambush units by night to take up specific positions, which he chose well, and specified the time when they should launch their attacks, when the enemy was preoccupied with the battle, whereupon these units were to attack from right and left. He chose the right times and the right places to attack the enemy. Thus his ambush manoeuvres during this battle are regarded as being among the most successful of ambush operations.¹⁵⁰

3.2.3. Ambushes during the siege

'Amr also succeeded in using ambush tactics during the siege of Babaliyon. Whilst the Byzantines were certain that the Muslims would not be able to cause them any harm because of their strong fortifications and walls, and their ample supplies of provisions and weaponry, and because of the barriers they had erected with spikes on the gates of the fortress, and the ditch that had dried up when the level of the Nile dropped, they were taken by surprise one night when az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām and a group of fighters climbed the walls, shouting *takbeer*, and caught them unawares, wielding their swords. The defenders in the fortress were defeated and sought a peace treaty and promises of safety, and the Muslims entered the fortress victorious.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islāmi*, p. 320.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

3.2.4. Patience in laying siege

During the sieges of Kiryoon and Alexandria, ‘Amr relied on patience. When he realized that it would be difficult to achieve victory over the Byzantines who had holed up in their fortress in Kiryoon, he tried once to launch an attack, but the attack failed. So he continued with skirmishes and waited for the passage of time, the defenders’ weariness, and the exhaustion of supplies and arms and men’s patience to take effect. This is indeed what happened. After the siege of Kiryoon had lasted for more than ten days, the Byzantines realized that the Muslims were determined to carry on with the siege, then they realized that they had no alternative but to surrender and hand over the fortress to the attackers. The same thing happened during the siege of Alexandria, except that in the latter case the siege lasted for a longer time (three months), because the Byzantines were fully aware that this was the last chance for their army and indeed for all of them; if they fell in Alexandria then they would fall in Egypt and all of North Africa, and this is exactly what did happen.¹⁵²

3.3. Sending the good news of the conquest to the caliph

‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ sent Mu‘âwiyah ibn Khadeej to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb with the good news of the conquest. Mu‘âwiyah said to him: “Why don’t you write a letter to send with me?” ‘Amr said to him: “Why do I need to write a letter? Are you not an Arab man who can convey the message? Did you not see everything?” When he came to ‘Umar he told him of the conquest of Alexandria, and ‘Umar fell down in prostration and said, “Praise be to Allah.” Mu‘âwiyah ibn Khadeej told of how he conveyed the good news of the victory to the

¹⁵² Op. cit., p. 320.

caliph: "When 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ sent me to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, I reached the mosque and whilst I was sitting there, a slave woman came out of the house of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and saw me looking tired, wearing travelling clothes. She came to me and asked, 'Who are you?' I said, 'I am Mu'āwiyah ibn Khadeej, the envoy of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.' She went away, then she came rushing back and I could hear the rustling of her *izār* against her legs. When she came up to me she said, 'Get up and answer the caliph, for his is calling you.' I followed her and when she went in, there I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, holding his *ridā'* in one hand and tying his *izār* with the other. He asked, 'What (news) do you have?' I said, 'Good news, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. Allah has granted us victory in Alexandria.' He took me out to the mosque, and said to the *mu'adh-dhin*, 'Call out to the people, *aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)'. Then he said to me, 'Stand up and tell your companions.' So I stood up and told them, then he prayed and went into his house, and turned to face the *qiblah* and said *du'ā'*. Then he sat down and said, 'O' slave woman, is there any food?' She brought some bread and oil, and he said, 'Eat.' I ate only a little because I felt shy. He said, 'Eat, for the traveller loves food. If I wanted to eat, I would eat with you.' I felt shy but I ate a little. Then he said, 'What did you say, O' Mu'āwiyah, when you came to the mosque?' I said, 'I thought, perhaps the caliph is taking a nap.' He said, 'That is not the right thing to say — or to think — if I slept during the day I would have neglected the people, and if I slept during the night I would have neglected myself. How can I sleep when I have these two concerns, O' Mu'āwiyah?'¹⁵³

From this report we may conclude that the mosque in the earliest period of Islam was the most important means of conveying information, as the Muslims would gather there when they heard the

¹⁵³ *Futooḥ Miṣr wa al-Maghrib*, p. 105; *Faṭḥ Miṣr bayna ar-Ru'yah al-Islāmiyah wa ar-Ru'yah an-Naṣrāniyah* by Dr. Ibrāheem al-Mutanāwi, p. 114.

call, “*aṣ-Ṣalātu Jāmi‘ah* (prayer is about to begin)”. This call meant that there was some important information to be conveyed to the Muslims. When they gathered, military, political or social statements would be read out to them. We also learn from this report something about the life of ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) when he was the caliph of the Muslims, as he said to Mu‘āwiyah ibn Khadeej: “If I slept during the day I would have neglected the people, and if I slept during the night I would have neglected myself. How can I sleep when I have these two concerns, O’ Mu‘āwiyah?” This points to his complete awareness of the rights of his own self and the rights of others. If a Muslim can combine both, then he will be one of the righteous and pious.¹⁵⁴

3.4. ‘Umar’s keenness to fulfil promises

When the Muslims reached Bilheeb and their prisoners reached Yemen, their governor sent word to ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ saying: “I used to give the *jizyah* to those who were more hated to me than you, the Persians and the Byzantines. If you want me to pay the *jizyah* in return for giving back to me what you have taken of my land, I will do that.” ‘Amr wrote to ‘Umar asking him for permission to do that, and they suspended fighting until they received ‘Umar’s response. The answer came back from ‘Umar: “Indeed, ongoing *jizyah* is dearer to us than booty which is divided and then is as if it never existed. As for the prisoners, if their king gives you *jizyah* on condition that you give the prisoners the choice between Islam and the religion of their people, then whoever chooses Islam is one of the Muslims and whoever chooses the religion of his people, impose the *jizyah* on him. As for those who are scattered in other lands, we cannot return them. ‘Amr made this offer to the ruler of Alexandria

¹⁵⁴ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi* by al-Ḥameedi, 11-12/348, 349.

and he accepted it. They gathered the prisoners and the Christians gathered, and they gave them the choice one by one. When someone chose Islam they said *takbeer*, and when someone chose Christianity they groaned and imposed the *jizyah*, until they were finished.¹⁵⁵

This is regarded as evidence of the sincerity of the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them), as they were unconcerned about worldly affairs and were focused on the Hereafter. They were genuinely keen to guide people to Islam, because the prisoners' entering Islam did not bring the Muslims any benefit in worldly terms, whereas if they continued to follow their religion that would bring some worldly gains, as they would be obliged to pay *jizyah* to the Muslims. Despite that we see 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) ordering that the prisoners be given the choice between becoming Muslim or paying the *jizyah*. When that order was implemented, the *Ṣaḥābah* and those who were with them said *takbeer* with more fervour than they had during the conquests whenever one of those Christians chose Islam, and they were distressed when someone chose to continue following his religion.

It is also worth noting the commitment of the *Ṣaḥābah* to the deal that had been worked out, which is clear from the statement of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) in his letter: "As for those who are scattered in other lands, we cannot return them." According to another report, he said: "We do not want to make a peace deal with him that is based on conditions that we cannot fulfil."¹⁵⁶ 'Umar looked at his ability to fulfil conditions before concluding any deal with the enemy, so that the Muslims would not be in a position of being unable to fulfil the conditions. This attitude is indicative of the high degree of sincerity — which is one of the elements of victory — because the one who

¹⁵⁵ *Al-Kāmil fee at-Tāreekh*, 2/177.

¹⁵⁶ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 12/351.

commits himself to something and then is unable to fulfil it may be excused, but if he thinks about it and tries to take precautions so that he will not find himself unable to fulfil the conditions, this is a sign of foresight and good management.¹⁵⁷

3.5. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ (عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص)

'Amr set off with his army towards Alexandria, and on the way there was some fighting between him and the people of that land, in which the Muslims were victorious. It may be noted that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ was wounded many times in his battles with the people of al-Kiryoon. A messenger came to him from his father to ask him about his wounds and 'Abdullâh said in verse:

"I say to myself when the pain grows intense,
Be patient, for soon you will be praised or blamed."

The messenger went back to 'Amr and told him what he had said. 'Amr said: "He is truly my son."¹⁵⁸

This was an attitude of patience and forbearance on the part of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ, who was well known for his knowledge and worship, which he combined with courage and patience in the face of hardship.¹⁵⁹

3.6. A house that was built for the caliph in Egypt

'Amr ibn al-Âṣ sent word to 'Umar, telling him: "We have built a house for you next to the *Jâmi'* mosque." 'Umar wrote back

¹⁵⁷ Pp. cit., 12/351.

¹⁵⁸ *Futooh Miṣr*, p. 57.

¹⁵⁹ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 12/330.

saying: "I am a man who lives in the Ḥijāz. Why would I have a house in Egypt?" and he commanded him to make it into a marketplace for the Muslims.¹⁶⁰

This is indicative of the restraint of the caliph 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and his asceticism with regard to outward worldly matters. If leaders and rulers put themselves above the matters of this world and its transient pleasures, then it is more appropriate that those who are below them should also shun such things.¹⁶¹

3.7. The claim that the Muslims burnt the library of Alexandria

Dr. 'Abdur-Raḥeem Muhammad 'Abdul-Ḥameed said: "We did not find any text or indication that 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ burned the library of Alexandria. All there is, is a text by Ibn al-Qaṣṭī, quoting from Ibn al-ʿAbari (d. 685 A.H./1286 C.E.) which says: "Yaḥya al-Naḥawi — who was from Alexandria and lived until the city of Alexandria was conquered by 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ — went to see 'Amr. He was known for his knowledge, so 'Amr honoured him and heard from him philosophical words with which the Arabs were not familiar." Ibn al-Qaṣṭī completed the story by saying: " 'Amr said to him, 'What do you want from us?' He said, 'The books of wisdom that are in the royal stores'... forty-five thousand, one hundred and twenty volumes. 'Amr thought that what Yaḥya had mentioned was too much, and he said, 'I cannot issue such an order without asking permission from the caliph.' He wrote to 'Umar and told him what Yaḥya had said, and 'Umar wrote back, saying: 'As for the books which you have mentioned, if what is in them is in accordance with

¹⁶⁰ *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 69.

¹⁶¹ *At-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 12/356.

the Book of Allah, then we should be content with the Book of Allah. If what is in them is contrary to the Book of Allah, then we have no need of them. So go ahead and destroy them.' 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ started distributing the books to the bath-houses of Alexandria, where they were burned in the stoves, and I was told the number of bath-houses at that time, but I forgot. They said that it took six months to burn them all, so listen to what happened and be amazed."¹⁶²

But this story of the book-burning was narrated before Ibn al-Qaṭṭī and before Ibn al-ʿAbarī. 'Abdul-Laṭeef al-Baghḍādī (d. 649 A.H./1231 C.E.) said: "It was a house of knowledge that was built by Alexander when he built the city, in which were stored the books that were burned by 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ with the permission of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ)." ¹⁶³

But if we study these reports, we must note the following points:

1. There is no connection between these three reports or between their narrators, even though they lived in a similar time frame.
2. There is no isnad to which these reports can be attributed; rather they reflect assumptions that are made by their authors.
3. These reports were written at a time that was distant from the conquest of Egypt and the time of 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ. So we may say with all certainty that this story is obviously fabricated and the following criticisms may be made:
4. The story of the burning of the library of Alexandria is not mentioned by those who wrote the history of Egypt and its conquest, who lived many centuries before those who wrote this story.
5. This story is not mentioned by al-Wāqidi, aṭ-Ṭabari, Ibn al-Atheer or Ibn Khaldoon, let alone Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, and it is not

¹⁶² 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ al-Qā'id wa as-Siyāsī, p. 133.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 134.

mentioned by Yaqoot al-Ḥamawī in his description of Alexandria.

6. This story can be traced back to the time of the Crusades, through al-Baghdādī, who may have fabricated it under pressure, or it may have been fabricated later on and attributed to him.

7. If this so-called library ever existed, then we may say that the Byzantines who left Alexandria could have taken it with them, and they probably did do that.

8. 'Amr could have thrown the books into the sea within a very short time, instead of burning them, which supposedly took six months. This points to the purpose behind the fabrication of this story. We can say without any hesitation that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ are innocent of what has been attributed to them in this fabricated story, which stems from the imaginations of people who love to exaggerate, so they imagined things that did not happen.¹⁶⁴

3.8. The meeting between 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and the Patriarch Binyāmeen

The historian Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam said: "In Alexandria there was a Coptic bishop called Abu Binyāmeen, who had fled into the desert because of the religious persecution that the Copts were suffering at the hands of the Christian Byzantines. When he heard that 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ had come to Egypt, he wrote to the Copts, telling them that the Byzantines no longer had a hold on power and their dominion had come to an end, and he told them to welcome 'Amr. It was said that the Copts who were in al-Farma became helpers of 'Amr on that day.¹⁶⁵ According to a report by the Coptic historian

¹⁶⁴ 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ al-Qā'id wa as-Siyāsī, p. 134.

¹⁶⁵ *Futoḥ Miṣr wa Akhbāruha*, Pp. 73, 74.

Sawirus ibn al-Muqanna, Sanutius, one of the Coptic leaders at that time, who was in charge of church affairs during the absence of the Patriarch Binyâmeen, told 'Amr where the Patriarch Binyâmeen was, and that he had fled from the Byzantines, fearing them. 'Amr ibn al-Âş wrote a letter to his agents in Egypt, telling them where Binyâmeen, the Patriarch of the Christian Copts, was, and that he had a covenant and a promise of protection and safety from Allah, so let him come in safety and tend to the affairs of his church and his people. When the bishop Binyâmeen heard of that, he returned to Alexandria with great joy, after having been absent for thirteen years. When he appeared, the people and the entire city rejoiced at his coming. When 'Amr learned of his arrival, he ordered that he be brought to him with full honour and respect, and when he saw him, he honoured him and said to his companions: "In all the cities that we have taken possession of, up till now I have not seen a man like this." The Patriarch Binyâmeen was very handsome and well spoken, with a tranquil and dignified manner. Then 'Amr turned to him and said: "Take care of all your churches and men; they are all under your control and you may manage their affairs."

Professor ash-Sharqâwi commented on this meeting by saying: " 'Amr kept the Patriarch Binyâmeen close to him until he became one of his dearest friends, and the Arabs who had conquered Egypt began to feel at ease. Their governor 'Amr ibn al-Âş addressed them on the occasion of the first *Jumu'ah* prayers in al-Fustât and said, 'Treat the Copts who are your neighbours well, for you owe them protection and are connected to them by marriage. So refrain from harming them, refrain from looking at their womenfolk and lower your gaze.' ”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ *Al-Fârooq*, p. 247.

4. Important Lessons from the Conquests of 'Umar

4.1. The nature of the Islamic conquests

Some Orientalist and Christian historians have attempted to misrepresent the Islamic conquests at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. They claimed that the conquests were religious wars and said that the Muslims were people of faith but they were fanatics who subjugated the people and made them accept their principles by means of force and indulging in ruthless bloodshed. They claim that they carried the Qur'an in one hand and the sword in the other.¹⁶⁷ Among those who focused on this idea were Sidio, Muir and Nipur. Muir quotes Nipur as saying: "For the survival of Islam, it was essential that it continue with its aggressive plans and enforce by the sword its demand that all people enter Islam, or at least spread its influence internationally. But it is inevitable for any religion that its followers will prefer war at some stage, and this was the case with Islam."

But the claim that the Muslims aimed to spread their faith by force or that they were more aggressive than others, is a claim that must be completely rejected.¹⁶⁸ Some Orientalists refuted this accusation and described the Islamic conquests as being based on a sublime attitude. Von Kremer says: "In their wars, the Muslim Arabs embodied good attitudes. The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade them to kill monks, women, children and the blind or handicapped, as he also forbade them to destroy crops or cut down trees. The Muslims

¹⁶⁷ *Tāreekh al-'Arab al-'Ām* by Sidio, p. 133.

¹⁶⁸ *Fath Miṣr bayna ar-Ru'yah al-Islāmiyah wa ar-Ru'yah an-Naṣrāniyah*, p. 126.

followed these instructions to the letter in their wars. They did not violate any sanctuary or destroy any crops. The Byzantines used to shoot poisoned arrows at them, but they did not respond in kind against their enemy. Pillaging towns and setting fire to them was the normal practice of the Byzantine army, whether it was advancing or retreating, but the Muslims adhered to their ideals and did not try to do any of these things.”¹⁶⁹

Rosenthal said: “The Islamic state expanded into other lands, calling others to the faith, and engaging in debate with other intellectual movements that were in existence. But above all, the advance of Islam demolished the ancient barriers of language and custom, and provided a rare opportunity to all peoples and civilizations to start a new intellectual life that was based on absolute equality, in a spirit of free competition.”¹⁷⁰

The historical reality shows that the Muslims did not force anyone to embrace Islam, because they adhered to the words of Allah:

«There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *Tāghoot* [false goods, idols, etc.] and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.»
(*Qur'an* 2: 256)

The reason why people converted to Islam was what they saw in Islam itself, which was a great blessing, and what they saw in the Muslims who embodied Islamic attitudes and adhered to the teachings, commands and prohibitions of the faith, and what they saw in the commanders and troops who called others by means of their deeds and actions. The attitude of the soldiers was the noblest

¹⁶⁹ *Al-Islâm wa Ḥarakat at-Tāreekh* by Anwâr al-Jundi, p. 83.

¹⁷⁰ *‘Ilm at-Tāreekh ‘inda al-Muslimeen*, translated [into Arabic] by Ṣâliḥ Aḥmad al-‘Alī, p. 46.

attitude ever known in the history of the world. The caliphs and commanders urged their troops to seek the help of Allah and to fear Him, to give precedence to the Hereafter over this world, to be sincere in jihad, to seek the pleasure of Allah in whatever they did, and to keep away from sin. They had a strong desire to save nations and individuals from servitude to other people so that they might become slaves of Allah, and to bring them out of the constrictions of this world to the vastness of the Hereafter. The Muslim leaders marched at the head of their armies, receiving the first blows in the battles of jihad, and many of them were martyred. And the leaders used to march at the back of the army at times of safety, so as to show kindness to them, carry burdens and help the weak. The leaders were, first and foremost, *dā'iyaḥs* who implemented the principles of Islamic warfare in full. Indeed, the Muslims fought in jihad for the sake of Allah and did not wage war as other states used to do.¹⁷¹

4.2. 'Umar's method of selecting commanders for the army

'Umar had a distinct method of selecting leaders for the conquest. He stipulated a number of conditions and guidelines for choosing commanders for his troops, which were as follows:

4.2.1. They should be pious and righteous, with knowledge of Islamic rulings

He used to say, "Whoever appoints an evildoer knowing that he is an evildoer, is just like him."¹⁷² When he sent word to Sa'eed

¹⁷¹ *Faṭḥ Miṣr* by Dr. Ibraheem al-Mutanāwī, p. 127.

¹⁷² *Mawṣoo'at Fiḥ 'Umar*, p. 100, quoting from *Seerat 'Umar*, by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 67.

ibn 'Âmir, appointing him as governor in some part of Syria, Sa'eed refused the post. 'Umar said: "No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, do not lay all the burden on my shoulders and sit in your houses."¹⁷³

4.2.2. The commander should be known for deliberation and caution

When 'Umar appointed Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi, he said to him: "Nothing prevented me from appointing Sulayf except the fact that he rushed to fight, and rushing to fight may lead to loss, except when it is based on sound calculation. By Allah, were it not for his haste, I would have appointed him, but nothing is right in war except deliberation."¹⁷⁴

4.2.3. He should be daring and brave, and skilled in archery

When 'Umar wanted to appoint a leader for the Muslim armies to conquer Nahawand¹⁷⁵, he consulted the people and they said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you know more about the people of Iraq and your troops have come to you, and you have seen them and spoken to them." He said, "By Allah, I shall appoint over them a man who will be the most courageous in battle when they meet the enemy tomorrow." They asked, "Who is it, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" He said, "An-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin al-Muzani." They said, "He is able for it."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 100, quoting from *Musannaf 'Abdur-Razzâq*, 11/348.

¹⁷⁴ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/266.

¹⁷⁵ Nahawand: A Persian city, close to Hamadhân.

¹⁷⁶ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/109.

4.2.4. He should be intelligent and wise

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: "Your right over me is that I should never send you on a fatal mission or keep you at the border posts for too long."¹⁷⁷ When 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ and his troops faced the Byzantines in the battle of Ajnadeen, the Byzantine commander al-Artaboos was the smartest of the Byzantines, a man of deep insight and cunning, who had assembled a huge army in Aelia' and Ramlah. 'Amr wrote to 'Umar with the news, and when his letter arrived, 'Umar said: "We have sent the Artaboos of the Arabs against the Artaboos of the Byzantines. Let us see how things will turn out."¹⁷⁸ When 'Amr wanted to gather information about al-Artaboos and his army, so that he could devise a wise plan of attack and defeat him, Ibn al-'Āṣ entered the camp of the Byzantine leader and was almost killed, but Allah saved him. 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ tricked al-Artaboos, and when news of that reached 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb he said: " 'Amr has defeated him, what a smart man 'Amr is!"¹⁷⁹

4.2.5. The commander should be smart and eloquent, with military insight and experience

The author of *al-Mughni* (Ibn Qudāmah al-Ḥanbali) said, when speaking of military commanders: "(The commander should be) wise, chivalrous, with knowledge of war and insight into the enemy's next move. He should be trustworthy, kind and sincere towards the Muslims."¹⁸⁰ Hence 'Umar chose Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ to lead the army in Iraq after consulting the people.

¹⁷⁷ *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 109.

¹⁷⁸ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/431.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 4/432.

¹⁸⁰ *Al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudāmah, 8/352.

4.2.6. He should be keen to do the job

Part of 'Umar's plan was not to appoint any man to do a job that he did not want to do and concerning which he had no conviction, unless he had no other choice, so that the job would be done in a proficient manner. On one occasion he urged the people to fight the Persians, but no one stood up (to volunteer). The next day, he repeated his plea, and no one stood up. On the third day he repeated his plea, and again no one stood up. When the fourth day came, the first one to volunteer was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, then the people followed his lead. He appointed Abu 'Ubayd in charge of them, as he was qualified for that position even though he was not a *Ṣaḥābi*. It was said to 'Umar: "Why didn't you appoint a man from among the *Ṣaḥābah* in charge of them?" He said, "I have appointed over them the one who responded first."¹⁸¹ These qualities were embodied in Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ and many others.

4.3. The rights of Allah, the leaders and troops, as derived from the letters of 'Umar

4.3.1. The rights of Allah

In his letters and exhortations, 'Umar reminded his commanders and troops of the importance of upholding the rights of Allah, among the most important of which are:

Enduring and being more patient than the enemy

Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty says:

¹⁸¹ *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

«O' you who believe! Endure and be more patient [than your enemy], and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.» (Qur'an 3: 200)

When he sent Sa'd ibn Abi al-Waqqâs to Iraq, he reminded him of the importance of patience and said: "Remember that every good action requires a certain quality. Good actions require patience in bearing whatever befalls you or strikes you. If you have patience then you will fear Allah."¹⁸² He also wrote to 'Ubaydah ibn Abi al-Jarrâh when he was in Syria, saying: "Allah praised people for their patience, as He said:

«And many a Prophet [i.e. many from amongst the Prophets] fought [in Allah's Cause] and along with him [fought] large bands of religious learned men. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allah's way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allah loves *aş-Şâbiroon* [the patient]. And they said nothing but, 'Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions [in keeping our duties to You], establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk. So Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves *al-Muhsinoon* [the good-doers].» (Qur'an 3: 146-148)

The reward of this world is booty and conquest, and the reward of the Hereafter is forgiveness and Paradise." He read this letter out to the people and told them to fight for the sake of Allah and to be patient so that Allah might give them the reward of this world and the excellent reward of the Hereafter.¹⁸³

¹⁸² *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/306.

¹⁸³ *Tāreekh Futooh ash-Shâm*, p. 183.

*Their intention when fighting should be
to support the religion of Allah*

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) understood the words of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): «“Whoever fights so that the word of Allah may be supreme is (fighting) for the sake of Allah.”»¹⁸⁴ So we see that his life, his advice and his letters were governed by this important concept.

Fulfilling the trust

Allah, the All-Compassionate, All-Merciful says:

«It is not for any Prophet to take illegally a part of the booty [Ghulool], and whosoever deceives his companions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took [illegally]. Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.» (Qur'an 3: 161)

Among ‘Umar’s advice to his commanders and troops was not to steal from the war booty before it was distributed, as he said: “When you meet the enemy, do not flee, and when you seize booty, do not steal from it.”¹⁸⁵

No room for favouritism in supporting the religion of Allah

One of the most famous sayings of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) concerning favouritism is: “Whoever appoints a man because of favouritism or blood ties, and does not appoint him for any other reason, has betrayed Allah and His Messenger, and whoever appoints an evildoer knowing that he is an evildoer, is just like him.”¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Bukhari, hadith no. 2655.

¹⁸⁵ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 85.

¹⁸⁶ *Al-Idārah al-‘Askariyah fee ad-Dawlat al-Islāmiyah*, 1/66.

4.3.2. The rights of the commander

'Umar stated in his letters and commands the rights of the commander, which include the following:

Constant obedience

When 'Umar sent Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi to Iraq as the head of the army, he sent with him Salamah ibn Aslam al-Khazraji and Sulayṭ ibn Qays al-Anṣāri (may Allah be pleased with them both), and commanded him not to take any decision without consulting them. He told him that they were from among the people of Badr. Then Abu 'Ubayd fought the Persians in the battle of the bridge. Sulayṭ had advised him not to destroy the bridge and not to cross over to where the Persians were, but he did not pay attention to him, which led to the defeat of the Muslim troops. Sulayṭ said: "Were it not that I do not like to be disobedient, I would have told the people to disobey him, but I listen and I obey."¹⁸⁷

*They should entrust their affairs to those
charged with authority among them*

Allah, the All-Powerful says:

«When there comes to them some matter touching [public] safety or fear, they make it known [among the people]; if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them [directly]. Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah upon you, you would have followed *Shayṭān* [Satan], save a few of you.»

(*Qur'an* 4: 83)

Allah made the people's entrusting their affairs to those charged with authority among them one of the means of reaching the

¹⁸⁷ Murooj adh-Dhahab, 2/315, 316.

right decision. If they think that a better way is hidden from their leader, they should point it out to him and advise him to follow it. Hence consultation is recommended in order to find the correct way.¹⁸⁸ 'Umar appointed a single leader for the troops so that they might entrust their affairs to him, and so that they would not have conflicting points of view that might result in division.¹⁸⁹

In the year in which 'Umar sent the Muslim armies to Nahawand and commanded them to gather there, the armies consisted of the troops from Madeenah, both *Muhâjjiroon* and *Anşâr*, under the leadership of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb (ؓ), the troops of Baṣrah under the leadership of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ؓ), and the troops of Koofa under the leadership of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ؓ). After they had gathered, 'Umar (ؓ) wrote to them saying: "When you meet, your commander is an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin al-Muzani."¹⁹⁰

Hastening to obey his commands

During the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb (ؓ), the first thing he did was urge the people to fight the Persians. He started calling them for three days, but no one responded. On the fourth day, the first one to respond was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, which led 'Umar to appoint him in charge of that mission, even though there were Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) there, because he had hastened to answer the call.¹⁹¹

When 'Umar sent 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân to Baṣra, he said to him, advising and reminding him: "Fear Allah with regard to what

¹⁸⁸ *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sultâniyah*, p. 48.

¹⁸⁹ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah Nash'atuha wa Taṭawwuruha*, 1/100.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1/113.

you have been appointed to do, and beware of being inclined towards arrogance that would spoil your bond with your brothers. You were a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ); you have been honoured after being humiliated, and you have become strong after being weak, and now you have become a commander with authority and a leader who is obeyed; when you speak you are listened to and when you issue orders you are obeyed. What a blessing that is, provided that you do not feel yourself to be more than you are and do not look down on others.”¹⁹²

Not arguing about the distribution of booty

Concerning the distribution of booty, one of the things that ‘Umar said was: “O’ Allah, I call upon You to bear witness over the governors of the regions, for I have only sent them to teach the people their religion and the Sunnah of their Prophet, to divide the *fay*’ and to be fair to them. Whoever is confused about any matter should refer to me.”¹⁹³

During the conquest of al-Ablah¹⁹⁴, when the booty was shared out among the troops, the share of one of them was a pot of copper. When he took possession of it, he realized that it was made of gold. The other soldiers noticed that and complained to the commander.¹⁹⁵ He did not know what to do, so he wrote to ‘Umar (ﷺ), telling him about that. The reply came back: “If he insists that he did not know that it was gold until after he took possession of it, and he swears to that effect, then give it to him. If he refuses (to swear) then divide it among the Muslims.” He swore the oath and it was given to him.¹⁹⁶ When the booty was gathered in the battle of

¹⁹² Op. cit., 1/114.

¹⁹³ *Al-Kharāj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 50.

¹⁹⁴ Al-Ablah: A city on the banks of the Tigris.

¹⁹⁵ *Al-Idārah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/120.

¹⁹⁶ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu’mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 128.

Jaloola', Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali said that one-quarter of it was for him and his people. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs (ؓ) wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb about that, and 'Umar said: "Jareer has spoken the truth. I said to him that if he thinks that he and his people fought in return for the share of those whose hearts are to be softened, then give them their share, but if they fought for the sake of Allah and His religion, seeking that which is with Him, then they are Muslims, with the same rights and duties as other Muslims." When the letter came to Sa'd he told Jareer about that, and Jareer said: "The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* has spoken the truth. We have no need of the one-quarter, rather we are among the Muslims."

4.3.3. The rights of the troops

In his letters and words of advice, 'Umar explained the rights of the troops, which included the following:

Inspecting the troops and checking on them

It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb said: "I draw up plans to prepare my army when I am in a state of prayer." This is because 'Umar was enjoined, as caliph, to be involved in jihad, so he was the commander of jihad, so in that regard he was like one who offers the fear prayer whilst facing the enemy.¹⁹⁷ When he appointed commanders, before he sent them out he would inspect them and advise them. Among the things that he used to say to them was, 'Wear your *izârs* and *rida's*, wear shoes and dress properly; engage in target practice and learn to ride horses well. Follow the way of the Arabs and avoid the luxurious styles of the non-Arabs.' You will continue to be strong so long as you practice horseback riding and archery."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ *Al-Fatâwa*, 22/609.

¹⁹⁸ *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/168.

This shows us the extent of 'Umar's keenness to prepare his army well and show their strength. His commanders followed his example by lining up their troops and inspecting them, and making a show of strength before the enemy, whether that was in battle or during the preparations for battle. 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ would address his troops in Egypt during *Jumu'ah* prayers and urge them to fatten their mounts; he warned them that they would not be given their salary if they did not do that. He said: "I do not want to hear that a man has fattened his own body and left his horse lean. Remember that I am going to inspect the horses as I inspect the men. Whoever makes his horse lean with no reason, I will deduct from his salary accordingly."¹⁹⁹

When Mu'āwiyah met 'Umar upon his arrival in Syria, 'Umar saw him living like a king. He denounced him for that and asked: "Are you behaving like Chosroes, O' Mu'āwiyah?" He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, we are on the frontier, facing the enemy, and we need to compete with them in the adornment of war and jihad." 'Umar remained silent and did not tell him that he was wrong, as the purpose explained to him had to do with supporting the truth and the faith.²⁰⁰

Kindness towards the troops during the march

'Umar wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ؓ) saying: "Be kind to the Muslims during their march, and do not force them to march to the point of exhaustion. Strive to make stops in suitable places, so that they may reach the enemy without losing any of their strength. For they are headed towards an enemy who is settled, whose troops and horses are well rested. Give them one day and one night off every week, so that they may rest and revitalize themselves, and put down

¹⁹⁹ *Futoḥ Miṣr* by Ibn 'Abdul-Hakam, p. 141.

²⁰⁰ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/137, quoting from *al-Muqaddimah*.

their weapons and equipment. Make your stops in places that are far away from the cities with which you have peace treaties.”²⁰¹

When ‘Umar sent reinforcements to the troops in Syria, he gave them mounts and provisions, and appointed Sa‘eed ibn ‘Āmir in charge of them. When they were about to set off, ‘Umar said: “Wait a minute, until I tell you something.” Then ‘Umar went towards the army on foot, and said to him, “O’ Sa‘eed, I have appointed you over this army, but you are not the best of them, unless you fear Allah. When you march, be as kind to them as you can; do not impugn their honour or look down on the young ones among them. Do not show favouritism to the strong among them, and do not lead them through caves. Take them through the plains and do not stop on any major road. I entrust you and the Muslims with you to the care of Allah.”²⁰²

Checking on them before they head out

‘Umar used to inspect the troops before they headed out and advise them to adopt a noble attitude and uphold noble values. He ordered Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqâs to fulfil promises made to the enemy if they requested safe passage, and not to betray them. He told him that mistakenly betraying a man would be a cause of doom and weakness for him and a source of strength for the enemy, and he warned him against becoming a source of shame and weakness for the Muslims.²⁰³

Not trying to deal with one who opposes him at the time of meeting the enemy, lest that lead to division and defeat

Among the advice that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) gave to his commanders was the following: “The leader of an army or a

²⁰¹ *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/169.

²⁰² *Târeekh Futooh ash-Shâm*, p. 186 by al-Azdi.

²⁰³ *Al-Idârah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/179; *at-Ṭabari*, 3/397.

campaign should not give anyone the *ḥadd* punishment of lashes until the battle is over, lest the *Shayṭān* cause him to join the *kuffār*.”²⁰⁴

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) sent Salmān ibn Rabe'e'ah al-Bāhili at the head of an army, he sent with him 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi. Some argument arose between 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and Salmān ibn Rabe'e'ah, and news of that reached 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). 'Umar wrote to him saying, “I have heard what you did to 'Amr, and that was not right. If I was in your position in a situation of war, I would look at 'Amr and Ṭulayḥah and bring them close and listen to them, for they have knowledge and experience of war. Then when you reach the Muslim lands you may regard them as they regard themselves, and draw close to the people of fiqh and Qur'an.”²⁰⁵ And he wrote to 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib saying: “I have heard about your arguing with your commander and insulting him. I have heard that you have a sword called aṣ-Ṣamṣāmah. Well I have a sword called al-Muṣammim and I swear by Allah that if I strike you with it, that will be the end of you.” When this letter reached 'Amr he said: “By Allah, if he decided to, he would indeed use it.”²⁰⁶

It is clear from these two texts that 'Umar fully understood how a commander should behave in hostile territory, creating harmony among his troops, especially when they were about to confront the enemy, and he understood that the leader should consult those who have experience of war, and that this does not mean that the relationship of love between them should end when they return to the territory where there is peace.

²⁰⁴ *Tāreekh al-Khulafā'* by as-Suyootī, p. 131.

²⁰⁵ *Al-Awā'il* by al-'Askari, 2/45.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

During the conquest of ar-Râha²⁰⁷, which was achieved at the hand of 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam, reinforcements came to him from Syria, led by Bisr ibn Abi Arta'ah al-'Âmiri, sent by Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân on the instruction of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). A dispute arose between them whilst they were in enemy territory. 'Iyâd had no need for the reinforcements, so he asked him to go back to Syria. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) wrote to 'Iyâd asking him to explain the reason why he had sent them back, especially since they had only come to help him and to give the impression to the enemy that reinforcements were coming one after another, so as to weaken their resolve and hasten their submission. 'Iyâd replied, "I was afraid that there might be rebellion and disunity among the troops, and because I had no need for reinforcements, I apologized to him and told him to go back. This is the reason why I sent him back."²⁰⁸ 'Umar approved of that and prayed for him, especially as they were facing the enemy, so as to avoid creating division and disputes that would lead to failure.²⁰⁹

*Keeping watch lest the enemy catch them unawares
whilst stopping and when on the march*

'Umar was very concerned with the issue of keeping watch, hence he ordered his commanders to be very careful lest the enemy attack them or catch them unawares. He asked them to appoint guards whenever they stopped and when they were on the move. He also advised them to send scouts and spies in all directions when reaching the land of the enemy, so that they would acquire full knowledge of the enemy's land and their intentions. He wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs saying: "When you enter the land of the enemy, send scouts between you and them, and be fully aware of their situation.

²⁰⁷ Ar-Râha: A city in al-Jazeerah region, between Moşul and Syria.

²⁰⁸ *Futooh ash-Shâm* by Ibn A'tham, 1/253-255.

²⁰⁹ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/188.

You should have with you Arabs and local people whom you trust and know to be sincere, for information brought by a liar will be of no benefit to you, even if some of what he says is true. A traitor is a spy against you, not for you. When you approach the enemy's land, you should send out many scouts and small detachments who can cut off the enemy's reinforcements and supply lines, and find their weak points. Choose as scouts people who are wise and tough from among your companions, and give them fast horses, so that if they meet the enemy, the first impression will be one of strength."²¹⁰

From this valuable advice, it is clear to us that the caliph 'Umar (ؓ) was not concerned only with sending spies against the enemy, rather he also used spies as a means of keeping an eye on the administrative affairs of the Muslim army by watching his governors, agents, commanders and troops, so that he would know what was happening among them and how the military campaign was being run. He had spies in every army and camp who sent him reports about what was happening.²¹¹

'Umayr ibn Sa'd al-Anṣārī complained to the caliph 'Umar; when he came to him among a group of people from Syria, he said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, between us and the Byzantines there is a city called 'Arabsoos. Its people tell our enemies all about our weak points, but they do not tell us anything about their weak points." 'Umar said to him: "When you reach it, give its people the choice between being given two sheep for every sheep, two camels for every camel, two of everything in return for one (as an incitement to leave). If they accept that, then give it to them (and let them leave), then destroy the city. If they refuse, then warn them and give them one year's respite, then destroy it."²¹² When 'Umayr ibn Sa'd came to

²¹⁰ *Nihāyat al-Arb*, 6/169.

²¹¹ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/396.

²¹² *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, 1/185.

them, he gave them this choice, but they refused, so he gave them one year's respite, then he destroyed the city.²¹³

Choosing the place to fight the enemy

‘Umar advised Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqâs not to engage in fighting until he had familiarized himself thoroughly with the lie of the land where the battle was to take place, including water sources and green areas for grazing the animals, and so on.²¹⁴ He also wrote to him before al-Qâdisiyah, telling him to stay close to their own land, because they knew its routes better than the enemy, and in the event of a defeat they would be able to withdraw and save themselves from being killed, and the enemy would not be able to catch up with them because they would be too afraid to follow them and they would not know the routes in that land.²¹⁵

In addition to that, ‘Umar appointed Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqâs, Salmân al-Fârisi and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân to go ahead of the army and choose the place for the battle and for the troops to stay.

‘Umar (ﷺ) distributed administrative tasks among his commanders²¹⁶, and stipulated that when selecting a site for their troops to camp, it should not be cut off from the supreme headquarters by any body of water, because of the headquarters’ central role in planning and sending reinforcements and supplies.²¹⁷ ‘Umar also wrote to Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh saying: “Do not let them camp in a place before you go and check it out for them and find out how it is.”²¹⁸

²¹³ Op. cit., 1/185; *al-Idârah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/395.

²¹⁴ *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/170; *al-Idârah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/205.

²¹⁵ *Al-Idârah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/205.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 1/206.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ *Al-Idârah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/207, quoting from *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 3/434.

Preparing what the troops need of supplies and fodder

'Umar used to send the Muslim troops to Iraq from Madeenah with supplies of sheep and camels for slaughter.²¹⁹ He also supplied them with mounts from the *hima* of an-Naqee' and ar-Rabdhah²²⁰ which were to be used for jihad for the sake of Allah. From every region according to need he would take horses from the surplus wealth of the people, as a precaution to be ready for war. In Koofa there were four thousand such horses, and a similar number in Baṣra, and horses were kept in every region according to need.²²¹ When 'Umar came to Syria to conclude a peace treaty with the people of Jerusalem, he established a department to organize supplies for the army, which was known as al-Ahra'. 'Amr ibn 'Absah was the first one who was appointed in charge of supplies for the armies.²²²

Encouraging them to fight

'Umar wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah, encouraging him to fight in jihad, saying: "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. From the slave of Allah 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the Commander of the Faithful, to Abu 'Ubaydah, 'Āmir ibn al-Jarrāḥ. Peace be upon you. I praise Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, openly and in secret, and I warn you against disobeying Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. I warn you and I forbid you to be among those of whom Allah says,

﴿Say, 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in

²¹⁹ *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, 2/314.

²²⁰ Ar-Rabdhah - located three days' distance from Madeenah.

²²¹ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/217.

²²² Ibid.

His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision [torment]. And Allah guides not the people who are *al-Fâsiqoon* [the rebellious, disobedient to Allah].²²³ (Qur'an 9: 24)

May Allah send blessings upon the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of the Messengers. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."²²³

When this letter reached Abu 'Ubaydah, he read it out to the Muslims, and they realized that the caliph was encouraging them to fight. There was no one among the Muslims who did not weep at the letter of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb.

'Umar also wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and the troops who were with him in Iraq, urging them to fight and commanding them to adhere to noble virtues, and forbidding them to commit sin.²²⁴ It was also part of the commander's role at the time of 'Umar to encourage the troops to fight.²²⁵

*Reminding them of the reward of Allah
and the virtue of martyrdom*

At the time of 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs stood up in al-Qâdisyah and reminded his troops of the reward of Allah, may He be exalted, and what He had prepared for them in the Hereafter of delight. He encouraged them to wage jihad and told them of what Allah has promised His Prophet of divine support and victory of Islam. He told them of the spoils, booty and land that would soon be theirs, and he ordered the readers to recite the *Soorah* of jihad (*Soorah al-Anfâl*).²²⁶

²²³ *Futooḥ ash-Shâm* by al-Wâqidi, 1/117.

²²⁴ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/239.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/356.

Similarly, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ stood and addressed the troops in Syria, reminding them of the reward and blessings of Allah and telling them that jihad was better for them than this world and everything in it.²²⁷

And it is well known that 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ said to the army in Palestine: "Whoever is killed as a martyr and whoever lives will be blessed." He commanded his troops to recite Qur'an and urged them to be patient and steadfast, and he encouraged them to seek the reward of Allah and His Paradise.²²⁸

Obliging them to fulfil the duties enjoined by Allah

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and the troops who were with him, offering the following advice: "I urge you and the troops who are with you to fear Allah in all circumstances, for fear of Allah is the best means of preparation to face the enemy and the best plan at times of war. I command you and those who are with you to be more cautious of sin than of your enemy, for the sins of an army are more alarming for them than their enemy, and the Muslims are only granted divine help because of their enemy's disobedience towards Allah."²²⁹

He should forbid them to be distracted by trade, agriculture and so on

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) ordered calls to go out to the commanders of his troops and inform them that their salary would be ongoing and provisions would be supplied to their families, and to tell them not to engage in agriculture; he even punished those who did not obey these orders.²³⁰ All of that was because 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was

²²⁷ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/243.

²²⁸ *Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, 1/18, 20.

²²⁹ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, p. 119.

²³⁰ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/256.

keen to make his troops focus completely on jihad and spreading Islam, and not let them become attached to the land that they farmed so that they became preoccupied with it. Thus 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was able to develop an army that was devoted to fighting and was ready for action whenever needed, and he guaranteed that they would not be scattered to gather fruits and engage in other agricultural tasks such as harvesting, tilling and marketing.²³¹

4.4. His concern with the borders of the state

'Umar worried about the Muslims and the borders of the Islamic state, which was expanding. He was reluctant to fight the Byzantines and when he mentioned them he said: "By Allah, I wish that there was a line of burning coals between us and them; whatever was within that line would be ours and whatever lay beyond it would belong to the Byzantines."²³² He said the same thing concerning the border between the Islamic state and Persia: "I wish that between as-Sawâd and the mountains there was a barrier, so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them. The countryside of as-Sawâd is sufficient for us, and I prefer the safety of the Muslims to the spoils of war."²³³

He ordered that military bases be set up, that would play a multi-faceted role; we have referred to some of them above. These would also serve as control centres in strategic locations near the border between them and the conquered lands, to repel any aggression from without, as well as being centres for the assembling of troops and for the spread of Islam. Foremost among these centres

²³¹ Op. cit., 1/257.

²³² *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/155.

²³³ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, quoting from *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/352.

were the cities of Baṣra and Koofa, which faced the Persian state, and al-Fuṣṭāṭ in Egypt.²³⁴ Other posts on the coasts of Egypt and Syria were set up to repel Byzantine attacks by sea. He later established four armies which were known as the army of Homs, the army of Damascus, the army of Jordan and the army of Palestine. The soldiers became known by the army in which they served, and the army name would be attached to their own names, so that the commanders could tell them apart and so as to make administrative matters run more smoothly, both during military missions and when paying the troops.²³⁵

This was in addition to the camps and fortifications on the borders from which the enemy had been expelled and which had been taken over by the Muslims who turned them into military bases and installed their troops there to protect the borders of the Muslim state.²³⁶

Every time the Muslims advanced, they would set up a border post in the farthest point they reached to guard the border, and they filled the post with soldiers who would stay there; the most qualified leader would be appointed in charge of it.²³⁷

Among the most important of these procedures that ‘Umar adopted in Iraq and the eastern regions were the outposts which were set up between the Muslims and the Persians. When news of the Persians regrouping under the leadership of Yazdagird reached the commander of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥārithah and the Muslims, they wrote to the caliph ‘Umar, telling him of that. The reply came: “Get out from amongst the Persians and scatter among the oases that are on

²³⁴ *Al-Idārah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/452.

²³⁵ *Futooḥ al-Buldān*, 1/156.

²³⁶ *Tāreekh at-Tamaddun*, by Jorji Zaydān, 1/179.

²³⁷ *Al-Idārah al-‘Askariyah*, 1/453.

the border between your land and theirs." Al-Muthanna carried out this order.²³⁸

Before al-Qâdisiyah, 'Umar (ﷺ) gave Sa'd this advice: "When you reach al-Qâdisiyah, let your outposts be at the edges of it."²³⁹ In Jaloola', 'Umar wrote to Sa'd saying: "If Allah defeats the two armies — the army of Mahrân and the army of al-Anṭâq — let al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr advance to the border post of Ḥulwân with the Muslim troops, in order to protect the area from enemy advancement, and to protect his fellow Muslim troops, whether they are on the march or in camp."²⁴⁰

Hence the commander Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) encouraged his troops in Iraq to advance towards the Persians, telling them that the borders and mountain passes were sealed, and saying, "There is nothing to fear behind you, so do not worry about being attacked from the rear."²⁴¹

We may note that these outposts that were set up during the time of 'Umar were only established on the orders of the supreme commander of the military administration, when the caliph 'Umar said to the commanders of the outposts: "Distract the Persians from your brothers, protect your ummah and your land, and stand guard over the border between Persia and al-Ahwaz until you receive further instructions."²⁴²

The number of posts in Koofa alone at the time of 'Umar was four: the post of Ḥulwân, which was commanded by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, the post of Masbadhân, which was commanded

²³⁸ Op. cit.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/454, quoting from at-Ṭabari.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

by Ḍirār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Fahri, the post of Qarqeesiya²⁴³, which was commanded by 'Umar ibn Mâlik az-Zuhri, and the post of Moṣul, which was commanded by 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'tim al-'Absi. Each of these commanders had a deputy who could run the post if he went out on some mission.

It is worth mentioning that whenever the Muslims built a fortified post or founded a new city, the first thing they did was to establish the mosque, because of the role it played in *da'wah*, teaching and jihad, as is well known.²⁴⁴

With regard to the guarding of the border between the Byzantines and the Muslims on the Syrian front at the time of 'Umar (ؓ), he also paid attention to that from the onset of the Muslim conquests in Syria, when he took many defensive measures to protect the region, such as building watchtowers, establishing border patrols, setting up outposts and fortifying coastal cities, as well as installing fighters in the conquered fortresses. He placed the entire Syrian coast under a single military command. In the year in which 'Umar himself went to Syria to sign the peace treaty with the people of Jerusalem, he checked on some of the Syrian border posts and set up guards and outposts. He travelled from one to another to see what their defensive needs were.²⁴⁵ Then he went back to Madeenah, but before he left, he addressed the people and said: "I have been appointed over you and I have fulfilled that which Allah appointed me to do for you. *In sha' Allâh* we have shared the *fay'* fairly among you. We have appointed troops for you, and we have made it easy for you by giving you your right to the booty..."²⁴⁶

²⁴³ A city on the Khaboor river, at the point where the Khaboor joins the Euphrates.

²⁴⁴ *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/455.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 1/457.

²⁴⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/40.

When Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh conquered Antakīyah (Antioch) on the northern border of Syria, the caliph 'Umar wrote to him saying: "Organize a group of good Muslims to stay in Antakīyah and protect the city, and do not withhold provision from them."²⁴⁷ Abu 'Ubaydah transferred some people from Homs and Ba'lbek to protect the border from any external aggression. He appointed Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah al-Fahri in charge of the border post, and he took the post of Antakīyah as a base for attacks on regions beyond the border. Supplies were sent from this post to the front lines on the Byzantine front, and from it was launched the attack on al-Jarjoomah²⁴⁸ with whose people a peace treaty was made, stipulating that they would help the Muslims against the Byzantines, and act as spies for them and set up outposts in the Likâm mountains.²⁴⁹ Similarly, when Abu 'Ubaydah marched to the border post of Bâlis²⁵⁰, he organized a group of fighters there, and settled it with Syrian Arabs who had become Muslims after the Muslims had come there, to guard the border and protect it against Byzantine attacks.²⁵¹

Other fortifications and defensive methods were adopted by the governor Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyan to protect the Muslim borders on the Syrian coast at the end of the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and at the beginning of the reign of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. He built a number of fortresses, such as Aṭarsus²⁵², Marqiyah²⁵³, Balniyâs²⁵⁴ and Bayt Saleemah. He also developed the fortresses that had been taken over by the Muslim troops on the Syrian coast, and

²⁴⁷ *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, 1/175.

²⁴⁸ Located in the Likâm mountains on the Syrian border.

²⁴⁹ *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, 2/123.

²⁵⁰ Bâlis: A city in Syria between Aleppo and ar-Raqqah.

²⁵¹ *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, 1/224.

²⁵² A city on the Mediterranean coast.

²⁵³ A citadel near Homs.

²⁵⁴ A small city and fortress near Homs.

filled them all with troops, allocating land for them and building watchtowers, where he installed guards to keep watch for the enemy. Each watchtower had a beacon to inform others that were nearby, until the news reached the city and other outposts within a short period of time, so that they could hasten towards the front from which the enemy was coming so as to block their advance.²⁵⁵

With regard to the defence of the border between the Muslims and the Byzantines on the Egyptian front during the reign of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), he paid attention to this as he did to the other fronts. He commanded 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ to build al-Fuṣṭāṭ as a military base and gathering-point for the Muslim troops in the region, and he appointed someone in charge of every tribe. This was the starting-point for the Muslim conquests of North Africa, in addition to its being one of the most important posts for the defence of Egypt, as well as other missions that it undertook. With regard to its location, as with previous bases, 'Umar stipulated that there should be no body of water between it and the central headquarters in the city, so that communications between them could be ongoing and straightforward.²⁵⁶

'Amr ibn al-Āṣ used to remind his troops that their stay in Egypt was a kind of guarding the border, as he said: "Remember that you are in a state of guarding the border until the Day of Resurrection, because of the large number of enemies around you who are longing to finish you off and take your land as a source of agriculture, wealth and many blessings." During the period in which the Muslim troops conquered the fortresses and outposts along the Egyptian border, they renovated and repaired them, and made use of them in guarding the border, stationing troops there. Al-'Areesh was

²⁵⁵ *Futooḥ al-Buldān*, 1/150-158.

²⁵⁶ *Futooḥ Miṣr* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam; *al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/462.

the first outpost in Egypt.²⁵⁷ 'Umar ordered that outposts be established along the entire Egyptian coast²⁵⁸, and when 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ conquered Alexandria, he stationed one thousand armed men there to guard it. Their number proved insufficient, which encouraged the Byzantines to come back by sea, and they killed a number of the armed men, whilst others managed to flee. 'Amr came back and conquered the area again, and this time he appointed one-quarter of his army to guard Alexandria. He stationed another quarter to guard the coast, and he stayed in al-Fuṣṭāṭ with the remaining half.²⁵⁹

Every year, 'Umar used to send warriors from Madeenah to be stationed in Alexandria, and he wrote to the governors telling them not to neglect that city and to allocate troops to it, in addition to the troops who were stationed there by 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ.²⁶⁰ Thus 'Umar's vision of protecting and guarding the land borders on the three fronts of Iraq, Syria and Egypt, was fulfilled.²⁶¹ Nor was the matter limited to these defensive means of guarding the Islamic borders. Rather 'Umar also established the system of summer and winter campaigns, whereby troops went out every year on regular patrols in the summer and in the winter, covering all the borders of the Islamic state. Some of the greatest leaders were in charge of these campaigns, such as Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Mu'āwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân, an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin and many others.²⁶²

²⁵⁷ *Tāreekh al-Ya'qoobi*, p. 330.

²⁵⁸ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/103.

²⁵⁹ *Al-Bahriyah fee Miṣr al-Islāmiyah wa Athāruha al-Bāqiyah* by Su'ād Māhir, p. 77.

²⁶⁰ *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 192; *al-Khuṭaṭ* by al-Maqreezi, 1/167.

²⁶¹ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/464.

²⁶² *Futooḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhuri, 1/194, 195.

'Umar increased the supplies and salaries given to those soldiers who were sent to guard the border posts, so as to help them put up with their being far away from their homes, and he also allocated land to them.²⁶³ 'Umar's commanders used to give a share of the booty to the men who were stationed at the outposts, just as they gave shares to their own soldiers, because the outposts were a shield for the Muslims, protecting them against attack from any direction.²⁶⁴ When the caliph 'Umar was dying, he offered advice to the caliph who came after him saying: "I advise the caliph who comes after me to treat the soldiers in the outposts well, for they are the shield of Islam; they collect money and annoy the enemy. He should not take from them anything except that which is surplus to their needs, with their consent."²⁶⁵

4.5. The relationship between 'Umar and the kings

The relationship between 'Umar and the king of Persia was one of war. When he died, his soldiers were still pursuing Yazdagird in his own land and dismantling his kingdom. With regard to his relationship with the king of Byzantium, the peace treaty between the two states was concluded after 'Umar had conquered Syria and al-Jazeera, and there was an exchange of letters between him and the king of Byzantium. Arab historians state that this correspondence was with Heraclius, but they do not say whether it was with Heraclius I, from whom 'Umar wrested the land of Syria, or with his son Heraclius II, who was known as Heraclius Constantine, because Heraclius I died in 641 C.E. (21 A.H.), and was succeeded by his son

²⁶³ *Al-Fann al-Ḥarbi fee Ṣadr al-Islām* by 'Abdur-Ra'oof 'Awn, p. 201; *al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 1/465.

²⁶⁴ *Al-Idārah al-'Askariyah*, 2/465; *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 4/134.

²⁶⁵ *Manāqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 219, 220.

in the same year, i.e., two years before the death of 'Umar (ﷺ). Whether the correspondence was with Heraclius I or Heraclius II, messengers used to come and go between them. Umm Kulthoom bint 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib, the wife of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, once sent a gift to the empress, the wife of Heraclius, with an envoy who had come to Madeenah from the king of Byzantium, and the empress sent a gift of precious jewels in return. 'Umar took them and placed them in the *bayt al-māl*. The books of history state that Umm Kulthoom sent that gift with the mail of 'Umar.²⁶⁶

4.6. The results of 'Umar's conquests

1. The destruction of the Sasanid Persian state, and the containment of the Byzantine Roman state, which brought about an end to the senseless conflict that had been ongoing between the Byzantines and the Persians, which has caused the peoples of the region to endure continuous wars that had exhausted both states, and for which there was no purpose except to protect the interests of the rulers of both states.
2. The emergence of a single leadership for this region which lay in the middle of the earth and extended from the borders of China in the east to North Africa in the west, and from the Arabian sea in the south to Asia Minor in the north. This was a new leadership such as mankind had never seen, subject to the same rules, systems and values as other peoples in the region.
3. The domination of a divine system over all people, without pressuring them to change their beliefs or their religions, and without differentiating between black, red, white or yellow. Rather all people

²⁶⁶ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/259; *Ashhar Mashāheer al-Islām*, 2/359.

were equal before the laws of Allah, and the only criterion of superiority was piety. The people realized the benefits of applying the laws of Allah in their lives, as that brought safety, stability, blessings and ample provision, etc.

4. The emergence of a new ummah, which was united by the doctrine of *Tawḥeed* and the laws of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. The bonds of race, lineage or other worldly factors no longer mattered. In this ummah emerged leaders of all races, who acquired positions of high status among the ummah, with nothing to detract from that status. Hence they used to say to those who fought them: "If you accept our religion, we will leave among you the Book of Allah as a way of life for you, and provided that you adhere to its rulings, we will go back and leave your country to you."²⁶⁷

5. There emerged an integrated, balanced and harmonious civilization, which included within its borders interactions between nations and peoples who were all subject to the laws of Allah. All peoples were accepted as members of this civilization, black, yellow and white, in accordance with the divine system and rulings. 'Umar became an example of leadership in his time, giving us a shining example of a knowledgeable, believing, strong man, who used all the resources of his state, his troops, his followers, his knowledge and all the means at his disposal to support the religion of Allah and serve mankind, to make the word of Allah supreme and to bring people forth from darkness to light, from the worship of men and material things to the worship of Allah. Thus he fulfilled the words of Allah:

«Those [Muslim rulers] who, if We give them power in the land, [they] enjoin *Iqamat aṣ-Ṣalâh* [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational *Ṣalâh* (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the

²⁶⁷ *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah* by al-Shajjâ', p. 370.

Zakah and they enjoin *al-Ma'roof* [i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do], and forbid *al-Munkar* [i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden] [i.e. they make the Qur'an as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allah rests the end of [all] matters [of creatures].» (*Qur'an* 22: 41)

The Islamic conquests produced a noble human civilization in the shade of Islam. Thus we may understand that a divinely-guided civilization is one in which a group interacts to act as vicegerent on earth within the framework of Islamic concepts of life, the universe and man.²⁶⁸

5. The Last Days of 'Umar's Life

The caliph 'Umar was a fine example of a just, believing caliph, a pious, pure, strong and honest *mujâhid*, a strong fortress for the ummah and its *'aqeedah*. He spent his entire caliphate serving his religion and his *'aqeedah* and his ummah, which he had been appointed to lead. He was the supreme commander of the army, and the *faqeeh* and *mujtahid* to whom everyone referred. He was a just judge and a compassionate father who was merciful to his flock, young and old, weak and strong, poor and rich. He was a sincere believer in Allah and His Messenger, a brilliant politician and a wise and decisive administrator. Under his leadership the structure of the ummah was strengthened, and during his reign the pillars of the Islamic state were established and the greatest victories were achieved over the Persians at al-Qâdisiyah, al-Madâ'in, Jaloola' and Nahawand. Syria and Egypt were conquered and freed from the domination of Byzantium.²⁶⁹ Islam entered most of the lands

²⁶⁸ *Al-Islâm wa al-Hadârah* by WAMY, 1/90.

²⁶⁹ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, by al-'Âni, p. 151.

surrounding the Arabian Peninsula. His caliphate was a strong barrier against tribulation and civil war. 'Umar himself was like a closed door, and those who sought to stir up tribulation could find no way to reach the Muslims during his lifetime.²⁷⁰

5.1. Discussion between 'Umar and Ḥudhayfah concerning tribulations (and the approaching breaking of the door)

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) said: "We were with Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) and he said, 'Who among you remembers what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said about *fitnah* (tribulation)? I said, 'I remember it as he said it.' He said, 'Tell us, what a great man your father was!' I said, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «The tribulation of a man is with regard to his family, his wealth, his own self, his son and his neighbour, and it may be expiated by means of fasting, praying and giving charity, and by enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.»' 'Umar said, 'That is not what I mean. What I mean is the tribulations which will come like the waves of the sea.' I said, 'What does that have to do with you, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? Between you and them is a closed door.' He asked, 'Will that door be broken or opened?' I said, 'It will be broken.' He said, 'Then it will never be closed until the Hour begins.'" Abu Wā'il, the one who narrated it from Ḥudhayfah, said: "Did 'Umar know who was meant by the door?" Ḥudhayfah said, "Yes. He knew it for certain." Then Abu Wā'il said, "Let us ask Ḥudhayfah who is meant by the door." We said to Masrooq, "Go and ask Ḥudhayfah who is the door." Masrooq asked Ḥudhayfah, "Who is the door?" Ḥudhayfah said, "It is 'Umar."²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen* by al-Khālidī, p. 77.

²⁷¹ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Fitan*, hadith no. 7096.

Ḥudhayfah informed ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that he was the strong door which was preventing tribulation or civil war from engulfing the Muslims, but this door would be broken, which meant that after that it would never be closed again until the Hour began. This is what ‘Umar understood, namely that tribulations would continue to be widespread and common among the Muslims and they would never be able to eliminate them or put a stop to them. Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) was not stating that of his own accord or expecting it to happen, for he had no knowledge of the unseen, rather he heard it from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and understood it and memorized it as he had heard it. Hence he commented on what he told ‘Umar by saying: “I have told you a hadith and I am not mistaken — i.e., it is a *ṣaḥeeḥ* and true hadith, not a mistake or a fabrication — because I heard it from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).” Moreover, ‘Umar was aware of the facts that Ḥudhayfah told him, for he knew that his caliphate was a strong door that was preventing tribulation from engulfing the Muslims, and that tribulation would never overwhelm the Muslims during his caliphate and his lifetime.²⁷² ‘Umar had learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he would be killed, and that he would meet Allah as a martyr. Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) climbed Mount Uḥud, accompanied by Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān, and the mountain shook with them. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stuck it with his foot and said, ‘Stand firm, O’ Uḥud, for there is no one on you but a Prophet, a *Ṣiddeeq* and two martyrs.”»²⁷³

5.1.1. The *du‘ā’* of ‘Umar during his last Ḥajj, 23 A.H.

It was narrated from Sa‘eed ibn al-Musayyib that when ‘Umar departed from Mina, he stopped in al-Abtaḥ, made a pile of sand, threw his cloak over it and lay down on it, then he raised his hands

²⁷² *Al-Khulafa’ ar-Rāshidoon* by al-Khālidi, p. 79.

²⁷³ Bukhari, *Kitāb Faḍā’il Aṣḥāb an-Nabi*, hadith no. 3675.

towards heaven and said: "O' Allah, I have grown old and weak, and the people under my care have been scattered. Take me (in death) before I commit any act of neglect or heedlessness." Then he went to Madeenah.²⁷⁴

5.1.2. 'Umar's prayer for martyrdom

It was narrated from Zayd ibn Aslam that 'Umar said: «"O' Allah, bless me with martyrdom for Your sake, and cause me to die in the land of Your Prophet." According to another report: "O' Allah, let me be killed for Your sake and die in the land of Your Prophet." It was asked: "How could that happen?" He said, "Allah may cause it to happen."»²⁷⁵ Shaykh Yoosuf ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abdul-Hâdi commented on 'Umar's prayer for martyrdom by saying: "Wishing for martyrdom is *mustahabb*, and it is different from wishing for death. If it is asked, what is the difference between them? The answer is that wishing for death is seeking to hasten death before its time has come, but the longer a man lives the more good he does. Wishing for martyrdom is asking for death at its proper time, as a martyr; it is not asking for death to be brought forward from its appointed time, rather it is seeking a virtuous death."²⁷⁶

5.1.3. The dream of 'Awf ibn Mâlik al-Ashja'i

'Awf ibn Mâlik al-Ashja'i said: "During the caliphate of Abu Bakr (ﷺ), I saw a rope hanging down from heaven, and the people

²⁷⁴ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/872. Its isnad is *ṣaheeh* up to Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib.

²⁷⁵ *At-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/331; its isnad is *ḥasan*. *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/872.

²⁷⁶ *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 3/791.

were stretching up to reach it. 'Umar was three cubits taller than the others, and I asked, 'Why is that?' He said, 'Because he is one of the vicegerents of Allah on earth, and he does not fear the blame of any blamer, and he will be killed as a martyr.' The next morning, I went to Abu Bakr and told him about that, and he said, 'O' slave, go to Abu Ḥaḥḥ and call him to me.' When he came, he said, 'O' 'Awf, tell him what you saw.' When I told him that he was one of the vicegerents of Allah, 'Umar said, 'Does a sleeper see all of this?' He said, 'Tell him about it.'²⁷⁷ When 'Umar was appointed caliph, he came to al-Jâbiyah and whilst he was delivering a speech, he called me and told me to sit down. When he had finished his speech, he said, 'Tell me about your dream.' I asked, 'Didn't you forbid me to speak of it?' He said, 'I didn't mean it, O' man.'²⁷⁸ According to another report, he said, 'Were you not telling lies?' He said, 'No, but I felt shy before Abu Bakr.'²⁷⁹ When I told him he said, 'As for becoming caliph, that has happened, as you can see. With regard to not fearing the blame of any blamer, I do not fear anyone but Allah, and I hope that that is true. But as for being killed as a martyr, how can that happen when I am in the Arabian Peninsula?'²⁸⁰

5.1.4. The dream of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari concerning the death of 'Umar

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari said: "I saw myself as if I had taken many horses, then they started to disappear, one after another, until only one was left. I took it and went to Jabal Zalaq, where I saw the

²⁷⁷ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/869.

²⁷⁸ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/868, 869. Its isnad is *ḥasan* and includes 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn al-Mas'oodi who is truthful but became confused before he died. *at-Taḡreeb*, no. 3919.

²⁷⁹ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/331; *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/868.

²⁸⁰ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/869.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with Abu Bakr beside him, and he was gesturing to 'Umar to come." I (the narrator) said, "Why don't you write news of that to 'Umar?" He said, "I do not want to tell him the news of his own death."²⁸¹

5.1.5. The last *Jumu'ah khutbah* given by 'Umar in Madeenah

'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf narrated some of what 'Umar said in his *khutbah* on Friday 21 *Dhu al-Hijjah* 23 A.H., which was his last *khutbah*. I have quoted what 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf said in my discussion of how Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq was appointed as caliph, in my biography of Abu Bakr. 'Umar himself told the Muslims of a dream that he had seen and interpreted it for them. He said in that last *khutbah*: "I have seen a dream, and I think it signals my death. I saw myself being pecked by a rooster twice, and the people were telling me to appoint a caliph after me. Allah will not cause His religion or His caliphate to be lost, nor that with which He sent His Prophet. If I die, then the caliphate is to be decided by a council of these six men with whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was pleased when he died."²⁸²

5.1.6. 'Umar's meeting with Ḥudhayfah before he was stabbed

Four days before 'Umar was martyred — i.e. on Sunday 23 *Dhu al-Hijjah* — 'Umar met with the two *Ṣāḥabis*, Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān and Sahl ibn Ḥunayf (may Allah be pleased with them both).

²⁸¹ *At-Ṭabaqāt* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/332, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

²⁸² *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyah Musnad al-Imām Ahmad*, no. 89, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

He had appointed Ḥudhayfah to estimate the *kharāj* on the land which was irrigated by the water of the Tigris, and he had appointed Sahl ibn Ḥunayf to estimate the *kharāj* of the land which was irrigated by the water of the Euphrates. He said to them: "What did you do? I am afraid that you may have imposed more that the land can bear." They said, "We imposed a reasonable amount." 'Umar said, "If Allah keeps me safe, I will leave the widows of the people of Iraq needing no man after me." But he was stabbed four days after this discussion with these two *Ṣaḥābis*.²⁸³

5.1.7. 'Umar preventing the prisoners from settling in Madeenah

'Umar did not give the prisoners from the conquered regions permission to enter Madeenah, the capital of the caliphate. He forbade the Magians of Iraq and Persia, and the Christians of Syria and Egypt, to settle in Madeenah, unless they became Muslim and entered the faith. This attitude is indicative of his wisdom and foresight, because these defeated people hated Islam and had plenty of motives to conspire and plot against Islam and the Muslims. Hence he forbade them to settle in Madeenah, so as to ward off evil from the Muslims. But some of the *Ṣaḥābah* (may Allah be pleased with them) had slaves from among these Christian and Magian prisoners, and some of them urged 'Umar to give permission to some of these slaves to settle in Madeenah, so that they could make use of them in their work. So 'Umar reluctantly gave permission to some of them to settle in Madeenah, and what he expected and had warned against came to pass.²⁸⁴

²⁸³ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon* by al-Khālidī, p. 82; Bukhari, hadith no. 3700.

²⁸⁴ *Al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshidoon* by al-Khālidī, p. 83.

5.2. The murder of 'Umar and the story of the consultative council (*shoora*)

5.2.1. The murder of 'Umar (ﷺ)

'Amr ibn Maymoon said: "I was standing with no one between me and him but 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās on the day when he was struck. When he passed between the rows, he would say, "Make (your rows) straight," and when they were straight, he would go forward and say *takbeer*, and he would recite *Soorah Yoosuf* or *an-Nahl*, or a similar *Soorah* in the first *rak'ah*, until all the people had gathered. No sooner had he said the *takbeer*, but I heard him say, "The dog has killed — or devoured — me!" when he was stabbed. The foreigner (non-Arab infidel) tried to flee, wielding a two-edged knife, and he did not pass by anyone, right or left, but he stabbed him. He stabbed thirteen people, of whom seven died. When one of the Muslim men saw that, he threw a cloak over him and when the foreigner realized that he had been caught, he killed himself. 'Umar took the hand of 'Abdur-Rahmān ibn 'Awf and made him go forward to lead the people in prayer. Those who were immediately behind 'Umar saw what had happened; those who were in other parts of the mosque did not realize, but they missed 'Umar's voice, and they were saying, "*Subhān-Allāh*." 'Abdur-Rahmān led them in a brief prayer, and when they finished, 'Umar said, "O' Ibn 'Abbās, see who killed me." He went around for a while, then he came and said, "It was the slave of al-Mugheerah." He asked, "The craftsman?"²⁸⁵ He said, "Yes." He said, "May Allah curse him, I told his master to treat him well. Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of a man who claimed to be a Muslim. You and your father — meaning

²⁸⁵ The craftsman: Referring to the slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, Abu Lu'lu'ah Fayrooz.

al-‘Abbâs and his son, ‘Abdullâh — wanted to bring more infidel foreigners to Madeenah!” Al-‘Abbas was the one who had the most slaves, and ‘Abdullâh said, “If you wish (we will kill them).” ‘Umar said, “No, that is wrong, after they have learned your language and started to pray facing your *qiblah*, and performed Ḥajj as you do.”

‘Umar was carried to his house, and we set off with him, and it was as if no calamity had ever struck the people before. Some *nabeedh* was brought to him and he drank it, but it came out from his stomach. Then some milk was brought to him and he drank it, but it came out through his wound. They realized that he was dying, so we entered his house and the people came and started praising him. He said: “O’ ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar, see what debts I owe.” They worked it out, and the total came to eighty-six thousand or thereabouts. He said, “If the family of ‘Umar can afford it, pay it off from what you collect from them. Otherwise ask Banu ‘Adiyy ibn Ka‘b, and if their wealth is not enough then ask Quraysh, but do not go to anyone else after them. Pay off this money on my behalf. And go to ‘Â’ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and say, “ ‘Umar sends you greetings of peace. Do not say *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*, for today I am no longer the leader of the believers. Say, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb is asking for permission to stay with his two companions.” ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar said *salâm* and asked permission, then he went to her and found her sitting weeping. He said, “Umar ibn al-Khattâb sends you *salâms* and is asking for permission to be buried with his two companions.” She said, “I had wanted it for myself, but today I will give it up for him.” When he came back, it was said, “Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar has come.” ‘Umar said, “Lift me up.” So a man helped him to sit up and he asked, “What news do you have?” He said, “That which you want to hear, O’ *Ameer al-Mu’mineen*. She has given permission.” He said, “Praise be to Allah, nothing was worrying me more than that. When I pass away, carry me there and say: “ ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb is asking

permission to enter. When permission is given to me, carry me in, but if she says no, then take me to the graveyard of the Muslims." When he died, we took him out and set off walking. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar said *salām* and said, "Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb is seeking permission to enter." 'Ā'ishah (ؓ) said, "Bring him in." So he was brought in and placed there with his two companions.²⁸⁶

There are other reports which describe in detail the events that are not mentioned in the report of 'Amr ibn Maymoon. Ibn 'Abbās (ؓ) said: "'Umar (ؓ) was stabbed before dawn, by Abu Lu'lu'ah, the slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, who was a Magian."²⁸⁷ Abu Râfi' (ؓ) said: "Abu Lu'lu'ah was a slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, and he used to make grindstones. Al-Mugheerah used to deduct four *dirhams* from him every day. Abu Lu'lu'ah met 'Umar and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, al-Mugheerah is taking too much from me; ask him to reduce it.' 'Umar said, 'Fear Allah and be good to your master.' 'Umar intended to speak to al-Mugheerah and ask him to reduce it, but the slave got angry and said, 'His justice extends to all of them except me.' So he planned to kill him. He made a two-headed dagger, sharpened it and put poison on it, then he showed it to al-Hormuzân, and asked, 'What do you think of this?' He said, 'I do not think you will strike anyone with it but you will kill him.' Then Abu Lu'lu'ah waited for an opportunity to strike 'Umar. He came to him at the time of *Fajr* prayer and stood behind 'Umar. As was his habit, when the *iqâmah* for prayer was given 'Umar spoke to the people and told them to straighten their rows, then when he said the *takbeer*, Abu Lu'lu'ah stabbed him in the shoulder and then in his side, and 'Umar fell down."²⁸⁸ 'Amr ibn Maymoon (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "When he was stabbed, I heard him say,

²⁸⁶ Bukhari, *Kitâb Fadâ'il as-Şahâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

²⁸⁷ *Şaheeh at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Hayât al-Fârooq*, p. 369.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 370.

﴿... And the Command of Allah is a decree determined.﴾

(*Qur'an* 33: 38)

5.2.2. Invention of a new way to select the caliph after him

‘Umar’s concern remained focused on the unity and future of the ummah even during the last moments of his life, despite the painful wounds from which he was suffering. Undoubtedly this was a manifestation of his deep faith, sincerity and selflessness.²⁸⁹ During those critical moments, ‘Umar managed to invent a new and unprecedented way of choosing the new caliph. This is tangible and clear evidence of his understanding of the politics of the Islamic state. The Prophet (ﷺ) had passed away before him without clearly appointing a successor, and when Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq passed away, he appointed ‘Umar after consulting the senior *Ṣaḥābah*. When ‘Umar was asked to appoint a successor as he was on his death bed, he thought for a while, then he decided on a different method that suited the situation. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died, the people were all agreed upon the superiority and seniority of Abu Bakr, so the possibility of conflict was remote, especially since the Prophet (ﷺ) had shown the ummah, in word and deed, that Abu Bakr was the most qualified to take control after he died. When Abu Bakr appointed ‘Umar as his successor, he knew that the *Ṣaḥābah* were all convinced that ‘Umar was the strongest and most capable of bearing that responsibility after he was gone. So he appointed him as caliph after consulting the senior *Ṣaḥābah*, and no one disagreed with him, so there was consensus and they all swore allegiance to ‘Umar.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by al-‘Âni, p. 161.

²⁹⁰ *Awwalīyât al-Fârooq*, p. 124; *Faṭḥ al-Bâri*, 13/208.

The method of selecting the new caliph was based on limiting *shoora* to a specific number of people. 'Umar chose six of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), all of whom had been present at Badr, and all of whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had been pleased with at the time of his death. All of them were fit to become caliph, even though they varied in their qualifications for the post. 'Umar also defined the way in which the selection was to be made, and how long it should take, and he specified the number of votes that would be sufficient to elect the caliph. He also appointed a man to watch over the procedures and cast the deciding vote in the event of equal numbers of votes for different candidates. He ordered some troops to keep watch over the proceedings and stipulated punishments for anyone who went against the *jamā'ah*. He sought to prevent disorder by ruling that no one was to enter or listen to what was going on in the assembly of decision makers.²⁹¹

There follows a more detailed discussion of these events:

*The number of those appointed
for the shoora, and their names*

The number of men appointed was six. They were: 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām and Ṭalhah ibn 'Ubaydullāh (may Allah be pleased with them all). Sa'eed ibn Zayd ibn Nufayl was excluded even though he was one of the ten who had been promised Paradise; perhaps that was because he from the tribe of Banu 'Adiyy (which was 'Umar's own tribe).²⁹²

²⁹¹ *Awwaliyāt al-Fârooq*, p. 124.

²⁹² *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/142.

The way in which the caliph was to be selected

He commanded them to assemble in the house of one of their number and consult with one another. ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar was to be present among them as an advisor only. Prayers were to be led by Şuhayb ar-Roomi during this consultation period, and al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad and Abu Talhah al-Anşâri were commanded to watch over the election proceedings.²⁹³

How long the selection process took

‘Umar (ؓ) stipulated a period of three days, which was sufficient time. If they took longer than that, it would mean that deep conflict would spread, so he said to them: “Do not let the fourth day come without you having a leader over you.”²⁹⁴

The number of votes that are sufficient to elect the caliph

“ ‘Umar commanded them to meet and consult one another, and he stated that if five of them agreed on a man and one objected, his head was to be struck with the sword. If four of them agreed on a man and two of them objected, their heads were to be struck.”²⁹⁵

This is a report which has no sound isnad. It is one of the weird stories quoted by Abu Mukhnaf, and is contrary to the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts and what is known of the conduct of the *Şaḥâbah*. Abu Mukhnaf narrated that ‘Umar said to Şuhayb: “Stand over them — i.e., the people of *shoora* — and if five agree on a man and one objects, strike his head with the sword. If four of them agree on a man and two object, then strike their heads.”²⁹⁶ But this is a false report. How could ‘Umar have said such a thing, when he knew that they were

²⁹³ *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islâm fee al-Ḥarb wa as-Siyâsah*, p. 648.

²⁹⁴ *At-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa’d, 3/364.

²⁹⁵ *Tāreekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/226.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

among the elite of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and he was the one who had chosen them for this task because he knew of their virtue and high status?²⁹⁷ It was narrated from Ibn Sa'd that 'Umar said to the Anṣār: "Let them stay in a house for three days. If they come to an agreement (all well and good), otherwise enter the house and strike their necks (i.e., cut off their heads)."²⁹⁸ This is a *munqaṭi'* report, and its isnad includes Sammāk ibn Ḥarb, who is *da'eef*.²⁹⁹

The correct report on this matter was narrated by Ibn Sa'd with an isnad whose men are *thiqāt* (trustworthy), according to which 'Umar said to Ṣuhayb: "Lead the people in prayer for three days, and leave this group of men in a house. When they have agreed upon a man, then whoever disagrees with them, strike his neck (i.e., execute him)."³⁰⁰ 'Umar (ﷺ) issued orders that anyone who tried to go against this group and cause division among the Muslims was to be executed, acting upon the command of the Prophet (ﷺ): «"Whoever comes to you when you are united behind one man, seeking to cause division among you, then execute him."»³⁰¹

Ruling in the case of a difference of opinion

'Umar advised them that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar should be present with them in the gathering, but he was not to play any role. But he told them: "If three men approve of one man and three approve of another man, then refer to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, and whichever of the two groups he favours, let them choose a man from among themselves. If they do not approve of the ruling of 'Abdullāh

²⁹⁷ *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fee Târeekh at-Ṭabari* by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 175.

²⁹⁸ *At-Tabaqât*, 3/342.

²⁹⁹ *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fee Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, p. 176.

³⁰⁰ *At-Tabaqât*, 3/342.

³⁰¹ Muslim, vol. 3, hadith no. 1480.

ibn ‘Umar, then go with the group among whom is ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn ‘Awf.” He described ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn ‘Awf as being wise and mature, saying, “What a wise man ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn ‘Awf is, and how mature. He is guided and protected by Allah, so listen to him.”³⁰²

A group of Muslim soldiers were to watch over the election and prevent disorder

‘Umar said to Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣârî: “O’ Abu Ṭalḥah, Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, has supported Islam through you. Choose fifty men of the Anṣâr to urge this group until they choose a man from among their number.”³⁰³ And he said to al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad: “When you have placed me in my grave, bring this group of men together in a house until they elect one of their number.”³⁰⁴

Thus ended ‘Umar’s life. He did not let the calamity that had befallen him or the agonies of death prevent him from organizing the Muslims’ affairs. He set up an unprecedented system for *shoora*, but there can be no doubt that the principle of *shoora* was already established in the Qur’an and the Sunnah, in the words and deeds of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr had already applied this principle, and ‘Umar was not introducing something completely new and innovated. Rather what ‘Umar did was to devise a method for selecting the new caliph, and to stipulate the number of people from whom he was to be chosen. This was not done by the Messenger (ﷺ) or Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه); ‘Umar was the first one to do that and he did well. It was the method that was best suited to the situation of the *Ṣaḥâbah* at that time.³⁰⁵

³⁰² *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/225.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ *Awwalīyât al-Fârooq as-Siyâsah*, p. 127.

5.3. 'Umar's advice to the caliph who was to come after him

'Umar (رضي الله عنه) offered important advice to the caliph who was to come after him and lead the ummah. He said: "I advise you to fear Allah alone, with no partner or associate. I advise you to treat the first *Muhājireen* well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the Anṣār well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes. I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy and conduits of *ḥaḡ*'; do not take anything from them except that which is surplus to their needs. I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam. Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor. I advise you to treat *ahl adh-dhimma* well, to defend them against their enemies and not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers or pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. I advise you to fear Allah and fear His wrath, lest you do anything wrong. I advise you to fear Allah with regard to the people, but do not fear the people with regard to Allah. I advise you to treat the people justly, and to devote yourself to looking after them and protecting them against their enemies. Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor. That will be better for your spiritual well being and will help to reduce your burden of sin, and it will be better for your Hereafter, until you meet the One Who knows what is in your heart. I instruct you to be strict with regard to the commands of Allah, His sacred limits and disobedience with all people, both relatives and others. Do not show any mercy to anyone until you have settled the score with him according to his offence. Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers. Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the *ḥaḡ*'

that Allah has put you in charge of, lest that lead to injustice. Keep away from that. You are in a position between this world and the Hereafter. If you conduct your affairs justly in this world and refrain from indulgence, that will earn you faith and divine pleasure. I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl adh-dhimmah*. I advise you sincerely to seek thereby the Countenance of Allah and the Hereafter. I have chosen advice for you that I would offer to myself or my son. If you do as I have advised you and follow my instructions, you will have gained a great deal. If you do not accept it or pay attention to it, and do not handle your affairs in the way that pleases Allah, that will be a shortcoming on your part and you will have failed to be sincere, because whims and desires are the same and the cause of sin is *Iblees*, who calls man to everything that will lead to his doom. He misguided the generations who came before you and led them to Hell, what a terrible abode. What a bad deal it is for a man to take the enemy of Allah as his friend, who calls him to disobey Allah. Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it and admonish yourself. I urge you by Allah to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them. Do not harm them or humiliate them, and do not keep the *fay* for yourself lest you anger them. Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor. Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children. Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich. Do not close your door to the people or allow the strong to oppress the weak. This is my advice to you, as Allah is my witness, and I greet you with peace.”³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶ *At-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa’d, 3/339; *al-Bayân wa at-Tabayeen* by al-Jâhidh, 2/46; *Jumhurat Khutab al-‘Arab*, 1/263-265; *al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/210; *al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by al-‘Âni, Pp. 171, 172.

This advice is indicative of 'Umar's farsightedness with regard to matters of ruling and administration, which clearly reflects an integrated methodology and system of ruling and administration.³⁰⁷ This advice covers a number of very important issues and deserves to be viewed as a precious document because it includes basic principles of ruling which incorporate the religious, political, military, economic and social aspects of rule.

5.3.1. Religious aspects

1. Strong advice to fear Allah in secret and in public, in word and deed, because the one who fears Allah will be protected by Him. "I advise you to fear Allah alone, with no partner or associate." "I advise you to fear Allah and fear His wrath."

2. Imposing the *ḥudood* punishments on relatives and strangers alike. "Do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers" because *ḥudood* punishments are set out by shari'ah and are part of the religion, and shari'ah is evidence against people, so their words and deeds will be measured according to it, and neglecting it will corrupt religion and society.

3. Firm adherence to Islam —

﴿So stand [ask Allah to make] you [Muhammad] firm and straight [on the religion of Islamic Monotheism] as you are commanded.﴾
(*Qur'an* 11: 112)

This is something that is essential in both religious and worldly terms, and is something that is required of the ruler in both word and deeds, and also of the people. "Admonish yourself." "Seek thereby the Countenance of Allah and the Hereafter."

³⁰⁷ *Al-Idārah al-Islāmiyah fee 'Aṣr 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 381.

5.3.2. Political aspects

1. Adhering to justice, because that is the basis of rule, and establishing justice among the people gives the ruler authority and respect, and brings political and social stability. It enhances the position of the ruler in the eyes of the people. "I advise you to treat the people justly." "Treat all people as equal."

2. Taking care of the first Muslims from among the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr, because of their seniority in Islam, and because the Islamic religion and the political system that is based on it was established as the result of their striving, and they are its bearers and guardians. "I advise you to treat the first *Muhâjireen* well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the Anṣâr well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes."

5.3.3. Military aspects

3. Paying attention to the army and preparing it properly, because of the great responsibility that is placed on its shoulders, in order to guarantee the safety and security of the state. Paying attention to the needs of the fighters.

4. Not keeping the fighters away from their families on the borders for too long, so as to avoid the boredom, anxiety and loss of morale to which that may lead. It is essential to give them leave at specified times and let them go back to their families, so that they will not cease to produce offspring. "Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children." "I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy."

5. Giving each soldier the *fay'* and stipend to which he is entitled, in

order to guarantee a fixed income for him and his family, which will motivate him to fight in jihad and prevent him from worrying about his financial affairs. "Do not keep the *fay*' for yourself lest you anger them." "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor."

5.3.4. Economic and financial aspects

6. Taking care to distribute wealth among the people in a just and fair manner, avoiding anything that could lead to the accumulation of wealth among one class, to the exclusion of others. "Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich."

7. Not burdening *ahl adh-dhimma* with more than they can bear if they fulfil their financial obligations to the state. "(Do) not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers."

8. Protecting the people's financial rights and not neglecting them; avoiding the imposition of more than they can bear. "Do not take anything from them except that which is surplus to their needs." "Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor."³⁰⁸

5.3.5. Social aspects

1. Taking care of the people, checking on them, meeting their needs and giving them their rights. "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due."

2. Avoiding selfishness, favouritism and following whims and desires, because these things pose the danger of the leader being led astray and leading to corruption in society and the disruption of

³⁰⁸ *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* by al-ʿĀmī, Pp. 174, 175.

human relations. "Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the *fay*' that Allah has put you in charge of." "Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor."

3. Respecting the people and being humble towards them, young and old, because this will lift human relations to a higher level and lead them to unite behind the leader and love him more. "I urge you by Allah to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them."

4. Being accessible to the people, by listening to their complaints, judging among them and settling scores, otherwise relations will be adversely affected and there will be instability in society. "Do not close your door to the people or allow the strong to oppress the weak."

5. Following the truth and striving to establish it in society in all situations and circumstances, because this is a social necessity that must be achieved. "Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it." "Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault."

6. Avoiding wrongdoing in all shapes and forms, especially with *ahl adh-dhimmah*, because justice is to be established among all those who come under the state's rule, Muslims and otherwise, so that all may benefit from the justice of Islam. "I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl adh-dhimmah*."

7. Taking care of the people of the desert and looking after them. "I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam."³⁰⁹

8. Further advice offered by 'Umar to the one who came after him

³⁰⁹ Op. cit., Pp. 173-175.

was: "Do not leave anyone who was appointed during my reign for more than one year, but leave al-Ash'ari for four years."³¹⁰

5.4. The final moments

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) described the final moments in the life of 'Umar when he said: "I entered to see 'Umar when he had been stabbed, and said, 'Receive the glad tidings of Paradise, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for you became Muslim when the people disbelieved, and you strove in jihad with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when the people let him down. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was pleased with you, no one disputed your appointment as caliph, and you have been killed as a martyr.' 'Umar said, 'Say it again.' So I repeated it to him, and he said, 'By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, if I had all the gold and silver in the world, I would pay it to avoid the terror of what comes after death.'"³¹¹ According to a report narrated by Bukhari, "As for what you have said about having been a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his having been pleased with me, that is a blessing that Allah has bestowed upon me. As for what you see of my worry, that is because I am worried about you and your companions. By Allah, if I had an earthful of gold, I would use it to ransom myself from the punishment of Allah before I saw it."³¹²

'Umar was profoundly afraid of the punishment of Allah even though the Prophet (ﷺ) had testified that he was bound for Paradise; despite that he made great efforts to establish the rule of Allah and justice, was a great ascetic, engaged in jihad and did other righteous

³¹⁰ *ʿAṣr al-Khilāfah ar-Rāshidah*, p. 102.

³¹¹ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Hayāt al-Fârooq*, p. 383.

³¹² Bukhari, *Kitāb Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 3692.

deeds. This offers an important lesson to the Muslims in general, that they should remember the stern punishment of Allah and the terrors of the Day of Judgement.³¹³

‘Uthmân tells of the last moments in the life of ‘Umar, as he says: “I was the last of you to see ‘Umar. I entered to see him and his head was resting in the lap of his son ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar. He said to him: “Lay my cheek upon the ground.” He said, “Is there any difference between my thigh and the ground?” He said, “Lay my cheek on the ground, may you be bereft of your mother,” the second or third time. Then he crossed his legs and I heard him say, “Woe to me and woe to my mother if Allah does not forgive me,” then his soul departed.”³¹⁴

This is an example of ‘Umar’s characteristic fear of Allah, for his last words were words of woe against himself if Allah did not forgive him, even though he was one of the ten who had been given the glad tidings of Paradise. But the one who knows more of Allah fears Allah more. His insistence that his son lay his cheek on the ground was a kind of humbling himself in order to glorify Allah, because that would be more likely to bring a response to his *du‘â*. This shows us how much his heart was focused on Allah.³¹⁵

5.4.1. The date of his death and his age at death

Adh-Dhahabi said: “He was martyred on a Wednesday, the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh of *Dhu al-Hijjah* 23 A.H., and he was sixty-three years old according to the correct view.”³¹⁶ His caliphate

³¹³ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19/33.

³¹⁴ *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 383.

³¹⁵ *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19/44, 45.

³¹⁶ *At-Tahdheeb*, no. 177, quoting from *Maḥd as-Ṣawâb*, 3/840.

lasted a little more than ten and a half years.³¹⁷ In *Tareekh Abi Zar'ah* it is narrated that Jareer al-Bajali said: "I was with Mu'âwiyah and he said, 'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was sixty-three years old, and Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) died when he was sixty-three years old, and 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was killed when he was sixty-three years old.'"³¹⁸

5.4.2. *Ghusl*, funeral prayer and burial

It was narrated from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar that 'Umar was washed and shrouded and the funeral prayer was offered for him, although he was a martyr.³¹⁹ The scholars differed concerning one who is killed unjustly — is he like a martyr so he should not be washed, or not? There are two views:

1. That he should be washed. This report is evidence for those who are of this opinion.³²⁰

2. That he should not be washed and the funeral prayer should not be offered for him. Their answer concerning the story of 'Umar is that 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) lived for a while longer after he was struck. If a martyr lives after he has been struck, even a martyr who is struck in battle, and eats or drinks or lives for a long time afterwards, then he is to be washed and the funeral prayer offered for him. 'Umar lived for a while afterwards, drinking water and whatever the doctor gave him. Hence he was washed and the funeral prayer was offered for him.³²¹

³¹⁷ *Siyar as-Salaf* by Abu al-Qâsim al-Isfahâni, 1/160.

³¹⁸ Muslim, *Faḍā'il as-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 2352; *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawāb*, 3/843.

³¹⁹ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/366, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³²⁰ *Al-Inṣāf* by al-Mardâwi, 2/503; *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawāb*, 3/844.

³²¹ *Maḥḍ as-Ṣawāb*, 3/845.

5.4.3. Who offered the funeral prayer for him?

Adh-Dhahabi said that Ṣuhayb ibn Sinân offered the prayer for him.³²² Ibn Sa'd said: " 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn asked Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, 'Who offered the funeral prayer for 'Umar?' He said, 'Ṣuhayb.' He said, 'How many *takbeers* did he say?' He said, 'Four.' He asked, 'Where was the prayer offered?' He said, 'Between the grave and the *minbar*.'"³²³ Ibn al-Musayyib said: "The Muslims looked and saw that Ṣuhayb was leading them in the obligatory prayers, on the instruction of 'Umar, so they made him lead the funeral prayer for 'Umar."³²⁴ 'Umar did not appoint any of the six candidates for the caliphate to lead the prayer, lest that be seen as an endorsement of that man by 'Umar. Ṣuhayb was also held in high esteem by 'Umar and the *Ṣaḥābah*, and 'Umar had said concerning him: "What a good man Ṣuhayb is; even if he did not fear Allah, he still would not disobey Him."³²⁵

5.4.4. The burial of 'Umar

Adh-Dhahabi said: "He was buried in the room where the Prophet (ﷺ) was buried."³²⁶ Ibn al-Jawzi narrated that Jâbir said: " 'Uthmân, Sa'eed ibn Zayd, Ṣuhayb and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar went down into the grave of 'Umar."³²⁷ It was narrated that Hishâm ibn 'Urwah said: "When the graves of the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Uthmân collapsed during the time of al-Waleed ibn 'Abdul-Mâlik³²⁸, they started to rebuild it, then a foot appeared and they got

³²² *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/845.

³²³ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/366, its isnad includes Khâlid ibn Ilyâs, who is *matrook*.

³²⁴ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/367; *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/845.

³²⁵ *Al-Fatâwa*, 15/140.

³²⁶ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/846.

³²⁷ Ibn Marwân al-Umawi, one of the Umayyad caliphs.

³²⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Janâ'iz*, hadith no. 1326.

scared, thinking that it was the foot of the Prophet (ﷺ). They could not find anyone to confirm that, until 'Urwah said to them, 'No, by Allah, it is not the foot of the Prophet (ﷺ) rather it is the foot of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه).''»³²⁹

We have mentioned above that 'Umar sent word to 'Ā'ishah saying: "Give me permission to be buried with my two companions." She said, "Yes by Allah." Hishām ibn 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr said: "If any man from among the *Ṣaḥābah* sent word to her concerning that, she would say, "I will not give it up for anybody."³³⁰ There is no dispute among the scholars; all are agreed that the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Umar are buried in this place in the Prophet's Mosque.³³¹

5.4.5. What 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib said concerning 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them)

Ibn 'Abbās said: " 'Umar was placed on his bed and the people surrounded him, praying for him before he was lifted up, and I was among them. Suddenly I felt a man taking hold of my shoulder and it was 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib. He prayed for mercy for 'Umar, then he said, 'There is no one that I would love to meet Allah with deeds like his more than you. By Allah, I always thought that you would join your two companions, for I remember that I often heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, «'Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I went; Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I entered; Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I came out.'»"³³²

³²⁹ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-I'tisām*, hadith nos. 2671 and 6897.

³³⁰ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawāb*, 3/848.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Manāqib*, hadith no. 3685.

5.4.6. The effect of his killing on the Muslims

This event had a great impact on the Muslims, for his death did not come after a lengthy illness. The impact was made greater by the fact that it happened in the mosque when 'Umar was leading the people in *Fajr* prayer. If we understand the state that the Muslims were in after this happened, we will realize what an effect it had on them. 'Amr ibn Maymoon said: "It was as if no calamity had ever befallen the people before that day. Ibn 'Abbâs went to find out what had happened after the killing of 'Umar, and he did not pass by any group of people but they were weeping as if they had lost the dearest of their children."³³³

'Umar was a beacon of guidance, a criterion between truth and falsehood, so it was natural that the people should be affected by his loss.³³⁴ The people were clearly affected deeply. It was narrated that al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays said: "When 'Umar was stabbed, he ordered Ṣuhayb to lead the people in prayer, and to feed them for three days until they agreed upon a man (to succeed him as caliph). When the food was served, the people refrained from eating. Al-'Abbâs said, 'O' people, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died and we ate and drank after he was gone, and Abu Bakr died, and we ate. The people cannot do without eating and drinking.' Then he stretched forth his hand (to take food) and the people ate."³³⁵

When mention of 'Umar was made to 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with them both), he wept until the pebbles grew wet with his tears, then he said: " 'Umar was a fortress of Islam, the people would enter Islam and not leave. When he died, the

³³³ *Al-'Ashara al-Mubashsharoon bi al-Jannah* by Muhammad Ṣâliḥ 'Awḍ, p. 44.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/855.

fortress was breached, and now people are going out of Islam.”³³⁶

Before 'Umar was killed, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ used to say: “If 'Umar dies, Islam will be weakened. I would not like to have all that the sun rises and sets over in return for surviving after 'Umar is gone.” It was asked to him, “Why?” He said, “You will see what I am speaking about if you survive. If anyone comes after 'Umar and tries to rule in the same style as 'Umar, the people will not obey him or support him, and if he is weak, they will kill him.”³³⁷

5.5. Lessons learned from the killing of 'Umar

5.5.1. Highlighting the hatred that is hidden in the *kāfirs'* hearts against the believers

This is indicated by the fact that the Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah killed 'Umar (عليه السلام). That is the nature of the *kuffār* in all times and in all places. Their hearts bear nothing but hatred, envy and resentment towards the Muslims, and they wish nothing but evil and doom for the believers. They would like nothing more than for the Muslims to apostatize from their religion and disbelieve after having become Muslims.³³⁸ Anyone who looks closely at the story of 'Umar's slaying and what this hate-filled Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah did, will learn two important things from it which reveal the hatred that this *kāfir* held in his heart towards 'Umar and the Muslims. These are:

1. It is proven in *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, with a *ṣaḥeeḥ*

³³⁶ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/284.

³³⁷ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*, 3/284; *al-'Ashara al-Mubashsharoon bi al-Jannah*, p. 44.

³³⁸ *Siyar ash-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar* by 'Abdul-Ḥameed as-Suḥaybāni, p. 36.

isnad going back to az-Zuhri,³³⁹ that 'Umar said to the Magian one day, "Have I not been told that you said, 'If I wanted to I could make a grindstone that is driven by the wind'?" The Magian turned to him frowning and said, "I shall make for you a grindstone that the people will talk about." 'Umar turned to those who were with him and said, "This slave is threatening me."

2. The second thing which points to the hatred that filled the heart of this Magian is that when he stabbed 'Umar, he also stabbed thirteen *Ṣaḥâbah*, seven of whom died as martyrs. According to the report of Imam al-Bukhari: "«The infidel foreigner flew with a two-edged knife and he did not pass by anyone on his right or his left but he stabbed him, until he stabbed thirteen men, of whom seven died.»"³⁴⁰ Even if 'Umar had wronged him, what had the other *Ṣaḥâbah* done who were attacked by him? Allah forbid that 'Umar should have wronged him. It is narrated in the report of Bukhari that when 'Umar was stabbed, he said: "«O' Ibn 'Abbâs, see who has killed me." He went to find out, then he came back and said. "(It was) the slave of al-Mugheerah." He asked, "The craftsman?" He said, "Yes." He said, "May Allah curse him; I told his master to treat him well. Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of a man who claims to be a Muslim.»"³⁴¹

Those enemies of Islam who love this Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah have built a memorial shrine to him in Iran which is similar to the idea of the "Unknown Soldier". As-Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Musawi, one of the scholars of an-Najaf, says: "In the Iranian city of Kashân, in an area called Bâghi Feen, there is a shrine like that of the 'Unknown Soldier' in which there is a fabricated grave for Abu Lu'lu'ah Fayrooz al-Fârisi al-Majoosi, the murderer of the second caliph

³³⁹ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/345, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³⁴⁰ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. They call it the 'resting place of Baba Shujā' ad-Deen'. Baba Shujā' ad-Deen is the name that they bestowed upon Abu Lu'lu'ah for his having killed 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. On the walls of this shrine it is written in Farsi, *'Marg bar Abu Bakr, marg bar 'Umar, marg bar 'Uthmân,*' which means 'Death to Abu Bakr, death to 'Umar, death to 'Uthmân'. The shrine is visited by the Iranian Shi'ah, and money and donations are given to it. I have seen this shrine myself. The Iranian Ministry of Guidance has started to expand and renovate it, and they have printed pictures of the shrine on cards to be used for sending greetings and messages."³⁴²

5.5.2. The humility and fear of Allah by which 'Umar was distinguished

One of the signs of this fear which prevailed in the heart of 'Umar just before he was martyred is the words he spoke when he found out that the one who had stabbed him was the Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah: «"Praise be to Allah, Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of one who claims to be a Muslim."»³⁴³ Despite the justice which was one of the qualities of 'Umar (ؓ), which was acknowledged by near and far, Arab and non-Arab, he was afraid that he might have wronged one of the Muslims, who had then taken revenge by killing him, and would have had something to argue about before Allah. This is indicated by the report of Ibn Shihāb, according to which 'Umar said: "Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my killer to have anything to claim before Allah because of a prostration that he performed." In the report of Mubārak ibn Faḍḍālah it says: "... to have anything to claim before Allah because

³⁴² *Lillāhi thumma li'l-Tāreekh, Kashf al-Asrār wa Tabri'at al-A'imma al-Aṭḥār*, p. 94.

³⁴³ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Manāqib aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, hadith no. 3700.

of saying *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh*.³⁴⁴ This is one of the wonders of the life of this divinely-guided leader, which all *dâ'iyahs* and reformers should learn; humility should be one of their main characteristics so that Allah may benefit others through them, as their forefathers benefited through 'Umar (ﷺ).

5.5.3. The deep humility of 'Umar and the great selflessness of 'Â'ishah

The humility of 'Umar (ﷺ)

This is indicated by the story of his martyrdom, when he said to his son 'Abdullâh: «“Go to 'Â'ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and say, ‘ ‘Umar sends you *salâms*. Do not say *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for today I am no longer the leader of the believers’.”»³⁴⁵ It is also indicated by his words to his son when 'Â'ishah gave him permission to be buried beside his two companions: “When I die, take me there, then say *salâm* and say, ‘ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb is asking permission to enter.’ If she gives permission, take me in, but if she refuses then take me to the graveyard of the Muslims.”³⁴⁶ May Allah have mercy on 'Umar and bless us with an attitude like his and humility like his. May He reward him with the best reward that He has bestowed upon the pious and humble, for my Lord is Ever Close, Ever Responsive.³⁴⁷

The selflessness of 'Â'ishah (ﷺ)

An indication of the selflessness of 'Â'ishah (ﷺ) is that she wished to be buried beside her husband (ﷺ) and her father Abu Bakr,

³⁴⁴ *Siyar al-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar*, p. 40.

³⁴⁵ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib as-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 41.

but when 'Umar asked permission for that, she allowed it and gave preference to him over herself. She said: "I had wanted it for myself, but I give it up today."³⁴⁸

5.5.4. Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil even on his deathbed

'Umar was concerned with enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and he did not neglect that even when he was facing death with all its pain and hardship. A young man entered to his place when he had been stabbed and tried to console him by saying, "Be of good cheer, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for Allah has given you glad tidings. You were one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and you served Islam, as you know. Then you were appointed caliph and you were just, and now you have been martyred." 'Umar said, "I wish that was enough to get me by, with nothing for me or against me." When the young man turned to leave, his *izâr* (waist wrapper) was touching the ground. 'Umar said, "Bring the boy back to me." He said, "O' son of my brother, lift up your garment, for that is cleaner for your garment and is more obedient to your Lord."³⁴⁹

The fact that he was dying did not keep him from enjoining what is good. Hence Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said, according to the report narrated by 'Umar ibn Shabbah: "May Allah have mercy on 'Umar; what he was suffering did not keep him from speaking the truth."³⁵⁰

Another example of his great concern to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil when he was in this state was when Ḥaḥṣah

³⁴⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ *Faṭḥ al-Bâri*, 7/65; *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 42.

(ﷺ) entered and went near him and said: "O' Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), O' in-law of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar said to Ibn 'Umar, "O' 'Abdullâh, sit me up, for I cannot bear what I am hearing." He leaned him on his chest, and he said to her, "I urge you by the rights that I have over you, not to eulogize me after this. As for your eyes (i.e., shedding tears), I have no power over them."³⁵¹

It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik said: "When 'Umar was stabbed, Ḥafṣah screamed. 'Umar said, "O' Ḥafṣah, did you not hear the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «'The one who is eulogized is tormented?'» Ṣuhayb came and said: "O' 'Umara (a form of eulogy in Arabic)." He said, "Woe to you, O' Ṣuhayb. Did you not hear that the one who is eulogized is tormented?"³⁵² His keenness for the truth even after he had been stabbed and his blood had flowed was such that when a man said to him: "Appoint 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar as your successor," he said, "It is not for the sake of Allah that you said this."³⁵³

5.5.5. It is permissible to praise a man for qualities that he possesses, so long as there is no fear of *fitnah*

This was the case with 'Umar, when some of the *Ṣaḥābah* praised him, because they knew that praising him would not cause any *fitnah* (temptation to admire oneself or become arrogant) to him. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), who was a great scholar and *faqeeh*, said: "Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) pray that Islam and the Muslims might be supported by you, when they were living in fear in Makkah?

³⁵¹ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 230; *al-Ḥisbah* by Dr. Faḍl Ilâhi, p. 27.

³⁵² *Faḍâ'il as-Ṣaḥābah*, by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, 1/814, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³⁵³ *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 43.

When you became Muslim, that was a support for Islam. Every household benefited from you with regard to their religious and worldly affairs. Now your life has ended with martyrdom, so I congratulate you." These words did not affect 'Umar at all, and he did not feel proud. Hence he replied to Ibn 'Abbâs saying: "By Allah, the one who is deceived is the one who believes you."³⁵⁴

5.5.6. The real position of Ka'b al-Aḥbâr with regard to the killing of 'Umar (ﷺ)

Ka'b al-Aḥbâr was Ka'b ibn Mâni' al-Ḥimyari, whose kunya was Abu Ishâq, but he is best known as Ka'b al-Aḥbâr. He was an adult at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he became Muslim during the caliphate of 'Umar in 12 A.H.³⁵⁵ Before becoming Muslim, he was well known as one of the greatest Jewish scholars of Yemen. After becoming Muslim he learned the Qur'an and Sunnah from the *Ṣaḥâbah*, and they and others learned stories of ancient nations from him. He went to Syria and lived in Homs, where he died.³⁵⁶

Ka'b al-Aḥbâr was accused as conspiring to kill 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. There is a report in at-Ṭabari from al-Musawwar ibn Makhramah (ﷺ) which refers to his being accused of killing 'Umar. In that report it says: "...then 'Umar went to his house, and the next day Ka'b al-Aḥbâr came to him and said to him, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, appoint a successor, for you are going to die in three days.' He asked, 'How do you know?' He said, 'I read it in the Book of Allah, the Torah.' 'Umar said, 'By Allah do you really find 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in the Torah?' He said, 'No, by Allah, but I find a

³⁵⁴ *Siyar ash-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar*, p. 45.

³⁵⁵ *Jawlah Târeekhiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad as-Sayyid Wakeel, p. 294.

³⁵⁶ *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/489-494.

description of you and your qualities, and it says that your time is up.' 'Umar was not feeling any sickness or pain. The next day Ka'b came to him and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, one day has gone and one day and night are left; the night is yours until morning comes.' The following morning, 'Umar went out to pray. He used to delegate men to check that the rows were straight, and once they were straightened, he would come and say *takbeer*. Abu Lu'lu'ah came among the people, with a dagger in his hand that had two heads and its handle in the middle. He struck 'Umar six times, one of which was below the navel, and that is the blow that killed him."³⁵⁷

Some modern thinkers concluded from this report that Ka'b al-Aḥbâr took part in the conspiracy to kill the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ؓ), such as Dr. Jameel 'Abdullâh al-Maṣri in his book *Athar Ahl al-Kitâb fee al-Fitan wa al-Huroob al-Ahliyah fee al-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijri*, and 'Abdul-Wahhâb an-Najjâr in his book, *al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, and Prof. Ghâzi Muhammad Fareej in his book *an-Nishât as-Sirri al-Yahoodi fi al-Fikr wa al-Mumârisah*.³⁵⁸ Dr. Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullâh ibn Ibrâheem az-Zughaybi refuted the accusation directed against Ka'b al-Aḥbâr by saying:

"What I think concerning this complex matter is that this report which was narrated by Imam at-Ṭabari (may Allah have mercy on him) is not *ṣaḥeeḥ* for many reasons, the most important of which are as follows:

1. If this story were true, one would have expected that 'Umar (ؓ) would not be content to accept what Ka'b said; rather he would have gathered those Jews who had become Muslim and had knowledge of the Torah, such as 'Abdullâh ibn Salâm, and asked them about this

³⁵⁷ *Târeekh at-Ṭabari*, 5/182, 183.

³⁵⁸ *Al-'Unsuriyah al-Yahoodiyah wa Athâruha fee al-Mujtama' al-Islâmi*, 2/518, 519.

story. If he had done that, then Ka'b would have been caught out and his lie would have been exposed to the people, and 'Umar would have realized that he was involved in a conspiracy to kill him, or he knew of such a conspiracy. In that case 'Umar would have tried to uncover it by all means and punish those who were behind it, including Ka'b. This is what one would expect of any ruler, let alone 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) who was known for his intelligence, sharp wits and insistence on critically examining any news. But no such thing happened, which indicates that it is a fabrication.³⁵⁹

2. If this story was in the Torah, Ka'b (may Allah have mercy on him) would not have been the only one to know it. Anyone who had any knowledge of the Torah, such as 'Abdullāh ibn Salām (رضي الله عنه), would also have known it.³⁶⁰

3. If this story was true, that would mean that Ka'b had a hand in the very conspiracy that he was disclosing and that by telling it he was exposing his own part in the conspiracy. This must be false because it is contrary to human nature. It is well known that those who are involved in a conspiracy strive hard to conceal it after it has taken place, so as to avoid the consequences. Disclosing it before it happened is something that would only be done by one who is naïve and foolish. This is unlike the character of Ka'b, who was intelligent and sharp-witted.³⁶¹

4. Moreover, what does the Torah have to do with predicting people's lifespans? Allah revealed His Books as guidance for mankind, not for such purposes.

5. The Torah that is extant at present does not contain any such thing

³⁵⁹ *Al-Ḥadeeth wa al-Muḥaddithoon aw 'Ināyat al-Ummah al-Islāmiyah bi'l-Sunnah* by Muhammad Abu Zahu, p. 182.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

at all. After noting these first four objections, Shaykh Muhammad Muhammad Abu Zahu³⁶² commented on them by saying: 'From all of the above, it is clear that this story is undoubtedly fabricated, and that the accusation against Ka'b of plotting against Islam by plotting against 'Umar, and quoting falsely from the Torah, is a false accusation for which there is no basis of evidence or proof.'³⁶³

Dr. Muhammad as-Sayyid Ḥusayn adh-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"The fact that Ibn Jareer at-Ṭabari narrated this story does not indicate that it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*, because as is well known, Ibn Jareer did not limit himself to narrating only those reports which were sound. Anyone who examines his *Tafseer* will find many things that are not *ṣaḥeeḥ*.³⁶⁴ Similarly, in his *Tareekh* there are reports which may be true or false. No one says that everything that is narrated in the books of history³⁶⁵ is true and sound.³⁶⁶ Then he goes on to say: "Moreover, what we know about Ka'b al-Aḥbâr and his religious commitment, good character and honesty, and the fact that most of the authors of *Ṣaḥeeḥ* class him as reliable³⁶⁷, leads us to conclude that this story is a fabrication against him. We think that he is above being a partner in the killing of 'Umar or knowing who was planning to kill him and failing to disclose that to 'Umar. We also think that he is above being a liar and fabricator who would try to support what he was saying about the death of 'Umar by attributing it to the Torah and making up false Isrâ'eeli reports.³⁶⁸... By Allah, Ka'b was falsely

³⁶² Op. cit., 2/524.

³⁶³ *Al-Ḥadeeth wa al-Muḥaddithoon*, p. 183.

³⁶⁴ *Al-'Unṣuriyah al-Yahoodiyah*, 2/525.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ *Al-Isrâ'eeliyât fee at-Tafseer wa al-Ḥadeeth*, p. 99.

³⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 96.

³⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 99.

accused and I can say nothing about him except that he is honest and trustworthy, and he is a scholar whose name was abused and many reports were attributed to him, most of which are false myths, in order to make them acceptable to the masses so that the ignorant would accept them."³⁶⁹

Dr. Muhammad as-Sayyid al-Wakeel says:

"The first thing that the researcher finds to contradict that which was attributed to Ka'b is the attitude of 'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Umar who, as soon as he heard what had happened to his father, took up his sword and rushed like a lion to kill al-Hormuzān, Jufaynah and a young daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah. Do you think that 'Ubaydullāh would leave Ka'b al-Aḥbār alone if suspicion was swirling about him, and kill the young daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah? Anyone who researches the matter properly could not accept that. In addition to that, the majority of historians do not mention the story or even refer to it. In *at-Ṭabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd discussed the incident in great detail, but he did not refer to this incident. All he says about Ka'b al-Aḥbār is that he was standing at 'Umar's door, weeping, and he said: "By Allah, if the caliph were to urge Allah to extend his lifespan, He would do so."³⁷⁰ After the doctor had told 'Umar that his end was near, Ka'b entered and said: "Did I not tell you that you would only die as a martyr, and you said, 'How can I be a martyr when I am in the Arabian Peninsula?'"³⁷¹

After Ibn Sa'd comes Ibn 'Abdul-Barr, who makes no mention at all in *al-Istee'āb* of the story of Ka'b al-Aḥbār.³⁷²

Ibn Katheer says:

³⁶⁹ *Al-Isrā'eeliyāt fee at-Taḥseer wa al-Hadeeth*, p. 99.

³⁷⁰ *At-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/361.

³⁷¹ *Ibid*, 3/340.

³⁷² *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshideen*, p. 296.

“The threat of Abu Lu’lu’ah came on the Tuesday evening, and he stabbed him on the morning of Wednesday 26th of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.³⁷³ So between the threat and the carrying out of the threat there was no more than a few hours. How could Ka’b al-Aḥbār have gone to ‘Umar and said to him what he is supposed to have said, “Appoint a successor, for you are going to die within three days”, then “One day has passed and two days are left,” then, “Two days have passed and one day is left”? Where did Ka’b get these three days from if the threat came at night and was carried out the following morning? The historians come one after another — as-Suyooti in *Tareekh al-Khulafa’*, al-‘Iṣāmī in *Samt an-Nujoom al-‘Awālī*, Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb and his son ‘Abdullāh in their book *Mukhtaṣar Seerat ar-Rasool*, Ḥasan Ibrāheem Ḥasan in *Tareekh al-Islam as-Siyāsi*, and others — and none of them mentions this story at all. Does this not indicate that the story cannot be proven in any manner that would make the researcher feel comfortable mentioning it? This is if we do not assume that the story was fabricated by some people who wanted to damage Ka’b’s reputation and put the Muslims off him. This is what one may feel comfortable accepting, especially since we know that Ka’b was a good Muslim and was trusted by many of the *Ṣaḥābah*, who narrated hadith of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) from him.³⁷⁴

5.5.7. Praise from the *Ṣaḥābah* and *salaf* for ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه)

The respect of ‘Ā’ishah for him after his burial

It was narrated that ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: “I used to enter my house in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr were buried, but when ‘Umar was buried with them, by Allah I did not

³⁷³ *Al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, 7/137.

³⁷⁴ *Jawlah fee ‘Aṣr al-Khulafa’ ar-Rāshideen*, p. 296.

enter it without covering myself properly, out of shyness towards 'Umar."³⁷⁵ It was narrated from al-Qâsim ibn Muhammad that 'Â'ishah (ؓ) said: "Whoever saw Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb would realize that he was created to support Islam. By Allah, he was intelligent and wise, and of a unique nature."³⁷⁶ It was narrated from 'Urwah that 'Â'ishah (ؓ) said: "When you mention 'Umar, then the atmosphere in a gathering becomes good."³⁷⁷

Sa'eed ibn Zayd (ؓ)

It was narrated from Sa'eed ibn Zayd that he wept when 'Umar died. It was asked to him: "What are you weeping for?" He said, "For Islam, for the death of 'Umar has created a breach in the wall of Islam that will never be repaired until the Day of Resurrection."³⁷⁸

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (ؓ)

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood said: "If the knowledge of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb were placed in one side of the balance, and the knowledge of everyone else on earth was placed on the other, the knowledge of 'Umar would weigh heavier."³⁷⁹

He also said: "I believe that 'Umar took nine-tenths of knowledge."³⁸⁰ And he said: "Umar's becoming Muslim was a victory, his migration was a support, and his rule was a mercy."³⁸¹

³⁷⁵ *Maḥq aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/852.

³⁷⁶ *Maḥq aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/853; all its men are *thiqât* (trustworthy) except 'Abdul-Wâhid ibn Abi 'Awf who is *ṣudoq* (sincere) but makes mistakes.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, quoting from *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 249.

³⁷⁸ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/372; *Ansâb al-Ashraf ash-Shaykhân*, p. 387.

³⁷⁹ *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, 12/32, its isnad is *ṣaheeh*.

³⁸⁰ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* by at-Ṭabarâni, 9/179, 180, its isnad is *ṣaheeh*.

³⁸¹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* by at-Ṭabarâni, 9/178, its isnad is *ḍa'eef* with interruptions.

Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī (ﷺ)

Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī said: "By Allah there is no family among the Muslims that was not adversely affected by the death of 'Umar in their religious and worldly affairs."³⁸²

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ)

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ) said: "The likeness of Islam during the days of 'Umar is that of one who is increasing in power and esteem, and when he was killed it started to decrease."³⁸³

'Abdullâh ibn Salâm (ﷺ)

He came after the funeral prayer had been offered for 'Umar and said: "You may have been ahead of me in praying for him, but you will not be ahead of me in praising him." Then he said: "What a good brother in Islam you were, O 'Umar, a great supporter of the truth and a great opponent of falsehood. You did not praise or criticize too much; you were of good character and chaste."³⁸⁴

Al-'Abbâs ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib (ﷺ)

He said: "I was a neighbour of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) and I never saw anyone who was better than 'Umar. His nights were filled with prayer and his days with fasting and meeting people's needs. When 'Umar died, I asked Allah to show him to me in a dream. I saw him in a dream coming towards me from the marketplace of Madeenah. I greeted him with *salâm* and he greeted me, then I said to him, 'How are you?' He said, 'I am well.' I asked him, 'What did you find?' He said, 'My reckoning has just finished. I was almost doomed, were it not that I found a merciful Lord.'³⁸⁵

³⁸² *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/374.

³⁸³ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/373, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

³⁸⁴ *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/369.

³⁸⁵ *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/345; there is some interruption in its isnad; *al=*

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân (ؓ)

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân (ؓ) said: "Abu Bakr did not desire worldly luxury and it did not become available to him. Worldly luxury was available to 'Umar but he did not want it. But we indulged fully in it."³⁸⁶

'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn

It was narrated from Ibn Abi Ḥāzim that his father said: "'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn was asked about Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) and their status with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He said: "It was like their status now, as they are lying next to him."³⁸⁷

Qubaysah ibn Jâbir

It was narrated that ash-Sha'bi said: "I heard Qubaysah ibn Jâbir say, 'I accompanied 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) and I have not seen anyone who was more well-versed in the Book of Allah or who had more understanding of the religion of Allah, or who was better in explaining it.'³⁸⁸

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri

He said: "If you want the atmosphere in a gathering to be good, then mention 'Umar a great deal."³⁸⁹ He also said: "Any family that does not feel the loss of 'Umar are bad people."³⁹⁰

=*Hilyah*, 1/54.

³⁸⁶ *Tāreekh al-Islām 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Rāshideen* by adh-Dhahabi, p. 267.

³⁸⁷ *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/908.

³⁸⁸ *Al-Ma'rifah wa at-Tāreekh* by al-Fasawi, 1/457. Its isnaad includes Mujâlid ibn Sa'eed who changed at the end of his life.

³⁸⁹ *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 251; *Maḥd aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/909.

³⁹⁰ *At-Ṭabaqât*, 3/372.

5.5.8. Opinions of some contemporary scholars and writers

1. Dr. Muhammad Muhammad [sic] al-Faḥḥâm, the former Shaykh of al-Azhar, said: "The achievements of 'Umar demonstrate his political genius and many talents, and his brilliance which is still a beacon in many area of life, showing how he dealt with the issues and problems that he faced during his caliphate."³⁹¹

2. 'Abbâs Mahmoud al-'Aqqâd said: "This man is one of the most difficult to criticize or find fault with of the great men whom I have studied. My book, *'Abqariyat 'Umar — The Genius of 'Umar* — is not a biography of 'Umar or a history of his era like other histories whose main aim to tell of events. Rather it is a description of 'Umar and a study of various aspects of his personality, which points out the characteristics of his greatness so as to learn of the potential of man. 'Umar is relevant to the era we are living in, because it is an era in which power and force are glorified, where the devotees of power and force believe that power and truth are opposites. But when we try to understand one great man such as 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, we could destroy the concept of glorifying power and strength from its foundations, because we would understand a man who was very powerful, very just and very merciful... This understanding of his character would offer a cure to those who have any hope of being cured."

3. Dr Aḥmad Shalabi said: "... his striving hard was one of the most prominent characteristics in the life of 'Umar during his eventful caliphate. He preserved the faith, raised the banner of jihad, conquered lands, spread justice among people, established the first finance ministry in Islam, formed a regular army to defend the borders, organized salaries for the troops, created departments,

³⁹¹ *Al-Idârah fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 391.

appointed governors, agents and judges, approved of a currency for daily use, organized a mail system, established the hisbah system for checking on markets, established the Hijri calendar, left conquered land without dividing it and founded the new Islamic cities.”³⁹²

4. Counsellor ‘Ali ‘Ali Maṣṣoor said: “The letter of ‘Umar to Abu Moosa al-Ash‘ari concerning judicial matters, fourteen hundred years ago, is a constitution for judges and those involved in judicial matters. It marks the highest level that contemporary laws have ever reached, laws that dictate the independence of the judicial process.”³⁹³

5. Brigadier Mahmoud Sheet Mahmoud said: “Although there were many reasons for the Islamic conquests, heading the list of these reasons are the qualities of leadership and brilliance enjoyed by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, qualities that are rarely repeated in any era.”³⁹⁴

6. Dr. Ṣubḥi al-Maḥmaṣāni said: “With the end of the caliphate of ‘Umar ended the era of the founder of the Islamic state, whose area he had expanded and whose foundations he had reinforced. He was an example of a wise and determined leader, a responsible ‘shepherd’, a just, strong, kind and compassionate ruler. Then he died, a victim of duty, a martyr to truth and righteousness, so he is with the *ṣiddeeqs* and the righteous, the close friends of Allah. The name of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb will remain forever as a beacon in the history of civilization and fiqh.”³⁹⁵

7. Shaykh ‘Ali al-Taṭṭāwi said: “The more I study the life of ‘Umar, the more my admiration for him increases. I have read the biographies of thousands of great men, both Muslims and non-

³⁹² Op. cit., p. 392; *at-Tāreekh al-Islāmi*, 1/609.

³⁹³ *Al-Idārah fee al-Islām fee ‘Ahd ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, p. 392.

³⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 393.

³⁹⁵ *Turāth al-Khulafa’ ar-Rāshideen fee al-Fiqh wa al-Qaḍā’*, Pp. 46, 47.

Muslims, and I have found among them those who are great in thought, or great in eloquence, great in attitude or great in legacy. But I found that 'Umar combined all aspects of greatness. He was great in thought, attitude and eloquence. If we were to list the greatest *fuyahā*' and scholars, 'Umar would head the list. If he had nothing but his fiqh, he would still be a great man. If we were to make a list of speakers and orators, 'Umar would be first on the list. If we were to list brilliant legislators, or military leaders, or successful administrators, 'Umar would be at the forefront of each category, a great man in every aspect. If you were to study the great men who have built states, who left a legacy behind on earth, you would hardly find anyone greater than 'Umar. Above all, he was a great man in attitude, a great man in and of himself.³⁹⁶

5.5.9. The opinions of some of the orientalist concerning 'Umar (ﷺ)

1. Muir says in his book *The Caliphate*: "Simplicity and devotion to duty were among the most important principles of 'Umar. One of the most prominent characteristics of his administration was the absence of bias. He understood the true meaning of responsibility and his sense of justice was very strong. He did not favour anyone when choosing workers. Even though he used to carry his stick with him to punish sinners straight away, so that it was said that the stick of 'Umar was harsher than the sword of any other man, he was a gentle-hearted man, and there are many incidents that demonstrate his compassion, such as his compassion towards widows and orphans."³⁹⁷

2. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says concerning him: "Umar was a

³⁹⁶ *Akhbār 'Umar*, p. 5.

³⁹⁷ *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, Pp. 54, 55.

wise and farsighted ruler, who did a great service for Islam.”³⁹⁸

3. Professor Washington Irving said in his book *Muhammad and His Successors*:

“The life of ‘Umar, from beginning to end, shows that he was a man of great brilliance who was committed to righteousness and justice. He is the one who laid the foundations for the Islamic state and carried out the wishes of the Prophet (ﷺ). He supported Abu Bakr with advice during his short caliphate, and he laid strong foundations for a decisive administration in all the lands conquered by the Muslims. The strong hand which he laid on the greatest of his beloved commanders in distant lands is the greatest evidence of his extraordinary ability to rule. In his simplicity of lifestyle and his rejection of luxury he was following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr. He followed in their footsteps when writing and issuing instructions to his commanders.”³⁹⁹

4. Dr. Michael Hart said:

“The legacy of ‘Umar had a great impact. He was the main personality behind the spread of Islam after Muhammad (ﷺ).⁴⁰⁰ Without his rapid conquests it is doubtful whether Islam would have spread in the manner in which it is known today. In addition to that, most of the lands which he conquered have remained Arab from that time until now. It is clear that Muhammad (ﷺ) played the major role in this, but it would be plainly wrong to ignore the role of ‘Umar and his leadership.”⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁸ Op. cit., p. 55.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ It seems that Mr. Michael Hart is unaware of the biography of Abu Bakr as-Şiddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him).

⁴⁰¹ It is also plainly wrong to ignore the role of Abu Bakr and his leadership after the death of the Messenger of Allah (bpuh).

Conclusion

With the death of the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ؓ) a great era of history came to a close. History knows him as a brilliant man of unique character. His main aim was not to accumulate wealth or seek the luxury of power; his position of authority did not make him drift away from the right path and he did not allow his relatives or sons to abuse people. Rather his main aim was to support Islam, and his greatest wish was that shari'ah would prevail. All he wanted was to achieve justice among the people under his care. He achieved all of that with the help of Allah, may He be glorified, during that brief period which is regarded as nothing in the lifetime of a nation.⁴⁰²

Studying this biography gives the new generation a brilliant example that brings back to life the glory of former days and teaches them that the last generations of this ummah will not be guided by anything other than that by which the first generations were guided. This will help *dâ'iyahs* and scholars to follow the example of the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and understand the main characteristics of that era and its running of people's affairs. This will help the ummah to resume its role at the forefront of civilization.

I ask Allah to accept this work and to bless it and cause it to be of benefit to people. Allah, the Exalted says:

﴿Whatever of mercy [i.e. of good], Allah may grant to mankind, none can withhold it; and whatever He may withhold, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾

(Qur'an 35: 2)

⁴⁰² *Jawlah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 297.

I hope that every Muslim who reads this book will not forget to say *du'ā'* for its author who is in need of the forgiveness and mercy of his Lord. Allah, the Almighty says:

﴿My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.﴾

(*Qur'an* 27: 19)

Glory and praise be to You, O' Allah. I bear witness that there is no god but You. I seek Your forgiveness and repent to You. And the close of my prayer is: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."

'Ali Muhammad as-Sallâbi

Glossary

<i>Adhân</i>	اذان : Call for prayer
<i>Aḥadeeth</i>	احاديث : Sing. Hadith; Sayings, deeds and approvals of the last Prophet (ﷺ)
<i>Ahl adh-Dhimmah</i>	اهل الذمة : Non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic State
<i>Ahl al-Bayt</i>	اهل البيت : Family of the last Prophet (ﷺ)
<i>Ahl al-Ḥarb</i>	اهل الحرب : Non-Muslims (outside the Islamic State) in a state of war with Islamic State
<i>Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah</i>	اهل السنة والجماعة : The main stream of the Muslims following the Sunnah of the Prophet recognizing Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali as the rightful successors of the Prophet in the same order
<i>Al-'Asas</i>	العسس : Night Patrolling
<i>'Âlameen</i>	عالمين : Universe, Mankind, jinn & all that exists
<i>Al-Bayt al-Ma'moor</i>	البيت المعمور : The House over the Heavens parallel to the Ka'bah at Makkah continuously visited and circumambulated by the angels
<i>Al-Birr</i>	البر : Righteousness
<i>Al-Fitan</i>	الفتن : Sing. <i>Fitnah</i> ; Trials, tribulations
<i>Al-Ma'roof</i>	المعروف : Conduct accepted as good and fair by human beings in general, deeds that Islam orders one to do
<i>Al-Munkar</i>	المنكر : Conduct accepted as bad and unaccep-

table or disapproved by human beings in general, anything hateful, immoral or reprehensible; disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam stands against

<i>Al-Qânit</i>	القانت : Pl. <i>Qâniteen</i> ; The obedient, humble, pious, God-fearing
<i>Al-Qadr</i>	القدر : Divine decree, Predestination, name of the 97 th <i>Soorah</i> of the Qur'an
<i>Ameer al-Mu'mineen</i>	أمير المؤمنين : The Leader/Commander of the believers, head of an Islamic state
<i>'Aqeedah</i>	عقيدة : Belief, faith, dogma
<i>Ar-Raheem</i>	الرحيم : All-Compassionate, one of the attributive names of Allah
<i>Ar-Rahmân</i>	الرحمن : All-Merciful, one of the attributive names of Allah
<i>'Aseedah</i>	عصيدة : Porridge, gruel made of flour with butter and honey
<i>'Aşr</i>	عصر : Afternoon, Afternoon prayer, name of the 103 rd <i>Soorah</i> of the Qur'an
<i>At-Tâ'oon</i>	الطاعون : The plague
<i>Âyât</i>	آيات : Sing. <i>Âyah</i> : Proofs, evidences, verses
<i>Barakah</i>	بركة : Blessing
<i>Bay'ah</i>	بيعة : Oath of allegiance
<i>Bayt al-mâl</i>	بيت المال : Public treasury
<i>Bid'ah</i>	بدعة : Innovation, deviation (in religion)
<i>Dâ'iyah</i>	داعية : Preacher
<i>Dâr ad-Daqeeq</i>	دار الدقيق : House of flour
<i>Da'wah</i>	دعوة : Propagation of Islam

- Dhâlimoon* ظالمون : Sing. *Dhâlim*: Lit. tyrannical; oppressive polytheists and wrongdoers
- Dhi'b* ذئب : Wolf
- Dhikr* ذكر : Remembrance of Allah
- Dhimmi* ذممي : Non-Muslim subject of an Islamic State
- Dhuhr* ظُهر : Noon, Noon prayer
- Dinâr* دينار : A monetary unit in the Arab world used in Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Jordan and Iran. Originally a coin made of gold and was used in the Muslim land
- Dirham* درهم : A coin used in various Arab countries: Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Tunisia and Monetary unit in Morocco. It was prevalent in the Muslim land before and was generally made of silver
- Deewân* ديوان : Divan, department, bureau, register of records
- Deewan al-Jund* ديوان الجند : Military divan, army, military department
- Diyah* دية : Blood-money paid to the survivor of the assassinated by the assassin
- Du'â'* دُعَاء : Supplication, prayer
- Eemân* إيمان : Faith, belief
- 'Eid* عيد : Lit. Festival; Muslims have two 'Eids, *'Eid al-Fiṭr* declaring end of Ramaḍân, *'Eid al-Aḍḥa*, the tenth day of the 12th month of the Muslim calendar
- Fâsiq* فاسق : Pl. *Fâsiqoon*; transgressor of the commands of Allah, an evildoer

<i>Fajr</i>	فَجْر : Dawn, Dawn prayer, 89 th Soorah of the Qur'an
<i>Faqeeh</i>	فَقِيه : Pl. <i>Fuqaha'</i> ; the Islamic Jurists
<i>Fatwa</i>	فَتْوَى : Pl. <i>Fatâwa</i> ; Religious ruling
<i>Fay'</i>	فَيْء : Spoils obtained without fighting as against war-booty. All of such spoils go to the Muslim treasury
<i>Fitnah</i>	فِتْنَة : Pl. <i>Fitan</i> ; Trial, tribulation
<i>Fitrah</i>	فِطْرَة : Nature
<i>Fuqara'</i>	فُقَرَاء : Sing. <i>Faqeer</i> ; the poor
<i>Ghanâ'im</i>	غَنَائِم : Sing. <i>Ghaneemah</i> ; War-booty as a result of the Muslim victory against the enemies of Islam in the battle-field
<i>Ghulool</i>	غُلُول : Things taken /stolen from the war-spoils without permission and prior to its distribution
<i>Hadd</i>	حَدّ : Pl. <i>Hudood</i> ; Limits set by Allah for the lawful and unlawful. <i>Hadd</i> punishments are specific fixed penalties laid down by the Shari'ah for specific crimes
<i>Hafeedh</i>	حَافِظ : Watcher, protector
<i>Halâl</i>	حَلَال : Things and acts permitted in Islam
<i>Halqah</i>	حَلَقَة : Study circle in the mosque
<i>Hamâm</i>	حَمَّام : Bath room, water closet
<i>Haneef</i>	حَنِيف : Pl. <i>Hunafa</i> ; True believer, one who scorns the false creeds surrounding him and professes the true religion, to worship none but Allah
<i>Harâm</i>	حَرَام : All that is forbidden in Islam

<i>Ḥasad</i>	حَسَد : Jealousy
<i>Ḥasanât</i>	حَسَنَات : Good deeds
<i>Hijâb</i>	حِجَاب : Veil, covering
<i>Hijrah</i>	هَجْرَة : Migration, migration of the last prophet and the early Muslims from Makkah to Madeenah
<i>Hikmah</i>	حِكْمَة : The wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet
<i>Hima</i>	حِمَى : A common grazing area set up by the state
<i>Hisbah</i>	حِسْبَة : Checking on the market
<i>Hullah</i>	حُلَّة : Dress like suit
<i>'Iddah</i>	عِدَّة : Waiting period for a divorcee/widowed woman before remarrying
<i>I'râb al-Qur'ân</i>	إِعْرَاب القرآن : Putting vowel signs to Arabic letters to facilitate correct pronunciation, syntax
<i>Iblees</i>	إِبْلِيس : Satan, the Devil
<i>Ifrâd</i>	إِفْرَاد : Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim need not perform 'Umrah and offer animal sacrifice
<i>Ihrâm</i>	إِحْرَام : Dress code for the (male) pilgrim for performing 'Umrah and/or Ḥajj
<i>Ihsân</i>	إِحْسَان : Excellence
<i>Ijmâ'</i>	إِجْمَاع : Consensus of the Muslim Jurists on some legal issues
<i>Ilah</i>	إِلَه : Pl. <i>Āliha</i> ; god, deity
<i>Iqâmah</i>	إِقَامَة : Call to begin the prayer
<i>Iqâmat as-Ṣalâh</i>	إِقَامَة الصَّلَاة : To establish prayer, it has a wider meaning than mere performance of prayer, to

	perform the daily five compulsory congregational prayers in the mosque; the call for prayer before the congregation begins
' <i>Ishâ'</i>	عشاء : Night, Night prayer
<i>Istawa</i>	استوى : Rose over (the Mighty throne)
<i>Istikhârah</i>	استخارة : Seeking Divine guidance, a prayer performed to seek guidance from Allah in a matter one is hesitant to decide
<i>Izâr</i>	إزار : Loincloth
<i>Jâmi'</i>	جامع : Mosque, compiler, comprehensive
<i>Jâhili</i>	جاهلي : Pre-Islamic, non-Islamic
<i>Jâhiliyah</i>	جاهلية : Time of ignorance, pre-Islamic period, non-Islamic
<i>Jamâ'ah</i>	جماعة : The main body of Muslims, congregation, collective body
<i>Janâzah</i>	جَنَازَة : Bier
<i>Jibt</i>	جِبْت : Witchcraft
<i>Jizyah</i>	جَزِيَة : Tax paid by the unbeliever living in the Islamic state under its protection
<i>Jubbah</i>	جُبَّة : A long dress for men
<i>Jumu'ah</i>	جمعة : Friday, 62 nd Soorah of the Qur'an
<i>Junub</i>	جُنُب : In a state of ritual impurity
<i>Kâfir</i>	كافر : Pl. <i>Kuffâr</i> , Disbeliever
<i>Kalâlah</i>	كَلَالَة : A deceased person among whose heirs there is no father or son
<i>Khaleefah</i>	خَلِيفَة : Caliph, vicegerent, successor, Muslim ruler

<i>Khamr</i>	خمر : Wine, alcohol, anything that befogs the mind
<i>Kharâj</i>	خراج : Tax collected from the conquered land
<i>Khaṭeeb</i>	خطيب : Public speaker, orator, the one who delivers sermon on <i>Jumu'ah</i> and at the time of <i>Nikâh</i> , i.e., marriage
<i>Khayr</i>	خير : Good, wealth
<i>Khuffayn</i>	خفين : Socks
<i>Khums</i>	خمس : One fifth, it connotes to the Islamic state's share in the war-booty
<i>Khushoo'</i>	خشوع : Humility (in prayer)
<i>Khutbah</i>	خطبة : Sermon
<i>Kufr</i>	كفر : Disbelief
<i>Kunyah</i>	كنية : Surname
<i>Lahd</i>	لحد : Grave
<i>Madh-hab</i>	مذهب : Juristic school of thought like Ḥanafî, Mâlîkî, Shâfi'î, Ḥanbali
<i>Maghrib</i>	مغرب : Evening, Evening prayer
<i>Mahr</i>	مهر : Bridal money/gift paid by the groom to the bride
<i>Majlis</i>	مجلس : Assembly, conference room,
<i>Makrooh</i>	مكروه : Reprehensible, an act disapproved in Islamic Law but not forbidden
<i>Minbar</i>	منبر : Pulpit
<i>Miskeen</i>	مسكين : Pl. <i>Masâkeen</i> ; poor, needy, pauper, indigent
<i>Mirbad</i>	ميريد : A place where dates are stored
<i>Mu'âhad</i>	مُعاهد : Ally, confederate

<i>Mu'adh-dhin</i>	مُؤَدِّن : Caller for prayer
<i>Mudd</i>	مُدّ : Half bushel - a dry measure
<i>Mufasssireen</i>	مُفَسِّرِينَ : Sing. <i>Mufasssir</i> ; The Exegete, persons interpreting the Qur'an
<i>Mufti</i>	مُفْتِي : A qualified person, specialist in Islamic Law, delivering religious ruling on specific matters
<i>Muhaddath</i>	مُحَدَّث : Inspired
<i>Muhâjiroon</i>	مُهَاجِرُونَ : Sing. <i>Muhâjir</i> ; emigrants especially the Makkan Muslims migrated to Madeenah at the time of the last Prophet
<i>Mujâhidoon</i>	مُجَاهِدُونَ : Sing. <i>Mujâhid</i> ; People who indulge in war for the cause of Islam
<i>Mujtahid</i>	مُجْتَهِد : A person qualified to derive religious rulings from the primary sources
<i>Musâqâh</i>	مُسَاقَاة : Sharecropping contract over the lease of a plantation, limited to one crop period
<i>Mushrikeen</i>	مُشْرِكِينَ : Sing. <i>Mushrik</i> ; Polytheist, believers in a number of deities, associating persons/ things with God as deity, pagans
<i>Mustahabb</i>	مُسْتَحَب : Recommended and not obligatory or/ and Sunnah
<i>Mut'ah</i>	مُتْعَة : Temporary marriage under certain conditions believed and practiced, nowadays, only by the Shiites
<i>Mutawakkiloon</i>	مُتَوَكِّلُونَ : Those who put their trust in Allah
<i>Mutawâtir</i>	مُتَوَاتِر : Lit. Continuous; In hadith terminology it stands for a hadith narrated continuously by a group of narrators at every stage of narration

<i>Muttakiloon</i>	مُتَكِلُونَ : Sing. <i>Muttakil</i> ; Relying/depending/ counting on others. Those who expect others to do things for them
<i>Muttaqoon</i>	مُتَّقُونَ : Sing. <i>Muttaqi</i> ; Pious, righteous
<i>Nafil</i>	نَفْل : Optional acts/deeds not obligatory or Sunnah by the Shari'ah
<i>Qâḍi</i>	قَاضِي : Judge of an Islamic court
<i>Qasâmah</i>	قَسَامَةٌ : Repeated oath taking by the heirs of the murdered in a legal claim in the court of law; Also an oath taken by fifty members of a tribe or locality to refute accusations of complicity in unclear cases of homicide
<i>Qiblah</i>	قِبْلَةٌ : Direction the Muslims turn to while praying, Ka'bah in Makkah
<i>Qintâr</i>	قِنْطَار : Pl. <i>Qanâṭeer</i> ; 'kantal' a relatively large weight-measure for food grains, e.g. wheat etc., approximately 45 kgs.
<i>Qeerât</i>	قِيرَاط : Pl. <i>Qarâreet</i> ; A measurement of weight with various meanings, with twelfth of a <i>dirham</i> to a huge weight like that of Mount Uhud (as reward for a good deed), a measure of weight or volume which varies from one era to another; also a dry measure, a weight equal to 0.195 gram
<i>Qirân</i>	قِرَان : Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim performs both 'Umrah and Ḥajj under one <i>ihrâm</i>
<i>Qiyâm al-Layl</i>	قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ : Mid-night prayer
<i>Qiyâs</i>	قِيَاس : Lit. Measure; Compare, correlate, in the fiqh it is analogy, i.e., principle of

- working out new rulings or decisions (according to Islam) on issues faced by the Muslim society
- Qunoot* قُنُوت : Lit. Humility; Devoutness, Islamically it is supplication made by the Muslims in the 2nd unit of *fajr* prayer and/or in the *witr* prayer after *rukoo'* and before *sajdah*
- Râ'y* رَأْي : Pl. *Āra*; Opinion, personal discretion, a legal decision based on the common sense in the absence of explicit guidance from the Qur'an, Sunnah, *Ijmâ'* and *Qiyâs*
- Rak'ah* رَكْعَة : A unit of prayer
- Riba* رِبَا : Usury, interest
- Sâ'* سَاع : A measure of volume equal to four *mudds*, a *mudd* = double-handed scoop
- Sa'i* سَعْي : An 'Umrah / Hajj ritual i.e., walking from Mount Safa to Marwa and back
- Şâbiroon* صَابِرُونَ : Sing. *Şâbir*; The patient
- Şadaqah* صَدَقَة : Amount paid to the poor or needy also used for Zakah
- Şahâbah* شَاحِبَة : Sing. *Şahâbi*; Companions of the last Prophet Muhammad
- Şaheeh* صَحِيح : Lit. Authentic; In hadith discipline it is used to denote that the narrated hadith is highly reliable
- Sakeenah* سَكِينَة : Calmness, tranquility and reassurance
- Salah* صَلَاة / صَلَاة : Prayer, obligatory/optional

<i>Salâm</i>	سَلَام : A type of greeting used by the Muslims meaning peace
<i>Ṣalât al-Istisqa'</i>	صَلَاة : Prayer for rain الاستسقاء
<i>Saweeq</i>	سَوِيق : A dish made of wheat or barley also with sugar and dates
<i>Seerah</i>	سِيرَة : Biography, generally this word is used for the biography of the Prophet and the Companions
<i>Shar'î</i>	شَرْعِي : Legal from Islamic point of view
<i>Shari'ah</i>	شَرْيعة : Islamic code or law
<i>Shayṭân</i>	شَيْطَان : Satan, Devil
<i>Shirk</i>	شِرْك : Polytheism, paganism, associating deities with the Creator
<i>Shoora</i>	شُورَى : A consultation body in the Islamic polity
<i>Ṣiddeeq</i>	صِدِّيق : Lit. the truthful; A title given to the first caliph Abu Bakr for his loyalty and belief in the Prophet without any shade of doubt
<i>Soorah</i>	سُورَة : Chapter (of the Qur'an)
<i>Ta'jeel</i>	تَعْجِيل : Haste
<i>Ta'zeer</i>	تَعْزِير : Punishment
<i>Tabi'een</i>	تَابِعِينَ : Sing. <i>Tabi'ee</i> ; The Followers, the second generation of the early Muslims, the one who didn't see the Prophet and attained Deen from the Companion
<i>Tafseer</i>	تَفْسِير : Interpretation, generally used for the interpretation of the Qur'an
<i>Tāghoot</i>	طَاغُوت : Lit. Exceeding limits of creatureliness;

Qur'anically the first stage of error is *Fisq* — disobeying Allah, 2nd stage is *kufr* — denying/rejecting God, last stage — not only rebelling against God but also imposing his will on others, this last stage is *ṭāghoot*, whoever is worshipped / blindly followed in opposition to the commands of Allah

<i>Takbeer</i>	تكبير : Lit. Magnification; Saying <i>Allāhu Akbar</i> , i.e., Allah is All-Great
<i>Tamattu'</i>	تمتع : Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim performs 'Umrah first and comes out of <i>Ihrām</i> and puts on <i>Ihrām</i> for Ḥajj on 8 th of Dhu'l Hijjah
<i>Tarāweeh</i>	تراويح : A prayer offered during Ramaḍān after 'Ishā' prayer
<i>Tasbeeh</i>	تسبيح : Lit. Glorifying; Saying <i>Subhān-Allāh</i>
<i>Tawāf</i>	طواف : Circumambulation (going round) of Ka'bah
<i>Tawḥeed</i>	توحيد : Lit. Unification; Islamically it is monotheism — believing that there is only one and alone diety: Allah
<i>Thiqah</i>	ثقة : Trustworthy
<i>Thughoor</i>	ثغور : Outposts
<i>Tilāwah</i>	تلاوة : Recitation
<i>'Uboodiyah</i>	عُبُودِيَّة : Lit. Slavery; In Islamic terminology Servitude to Allah alone
<i>Umm walad</i>	أُمُّ وَلَد : A concubine who bore her master a child
<i>Ummah</i>	أُمَّة : Nation

'Umrah	عُمْرَة : Minor pilgrimage to Makkah performed anytime of the year
Uqiyah	اَوْقِيَة : A measure of silver equal to forty <i>dirhams</i> or 123 gms. of silver
'Ushoor	عُشُور : Sing. 'Ushr; One tenth of the yield of land to be levied for public assistance, the tithes paid by merchants
Waba'	وَبَاء : An epidemic
Wahī	وَحْي : Revelation
Wakeel	وَكِيل : Trustee, Disposer of affairs or Guardian
Wali	وَلِي : Protector, Supporter, Helper
Waqf	وَقْف : Trust, an unalienable endowment for a charitable purpose
Wasq	وَسْق : Pl. <i>awsâq</i> ; A measure of volume equal to sixty <i>sâ's</i>
Wudoo'	وُضُوء ; Ablution to attain ritual purity for prayer etc.
Zakah	زَكَاة / زَكُوَة : Lit. to grow, to purify/cleans; Islamically it is one of the five pillars of Islam, generally translated as alms and poor due, a wealth tax paid on certain forms of wealth: gold and silver, staple crops, livestock and trading goods, as regards its distribution <i>Qur'an</i> 9: 60 gives the details
Zakât al-Fiṭr	زَكَاةُ الْفِطْرِ : An obligatory charity to be paid by every believer for himself and his dependants at the end of Ramaḍân and before 'Eid prayer
Zinâ	زِنَا : Fornication, illegal sex, adultery
Zuhd	زُهْد : Asceticism